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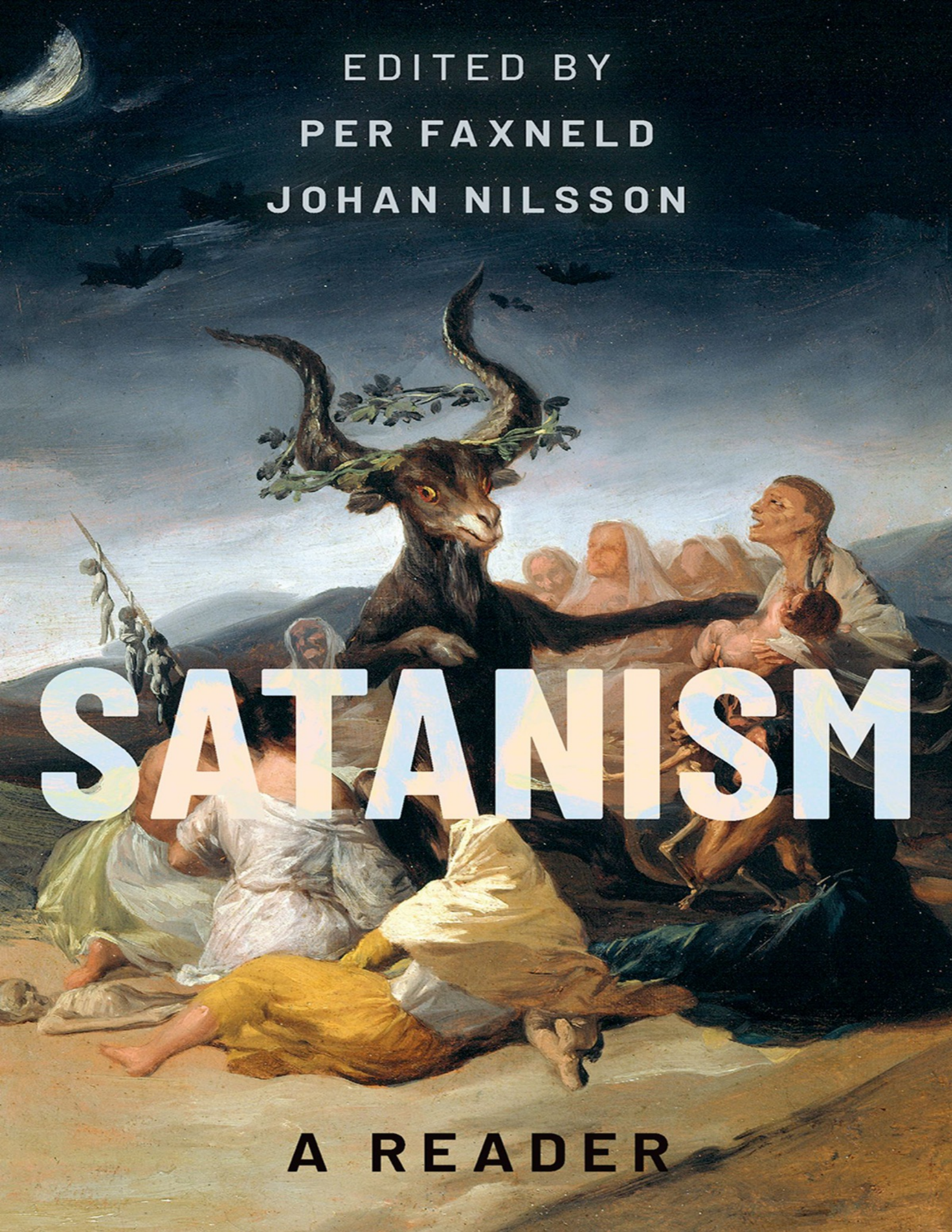
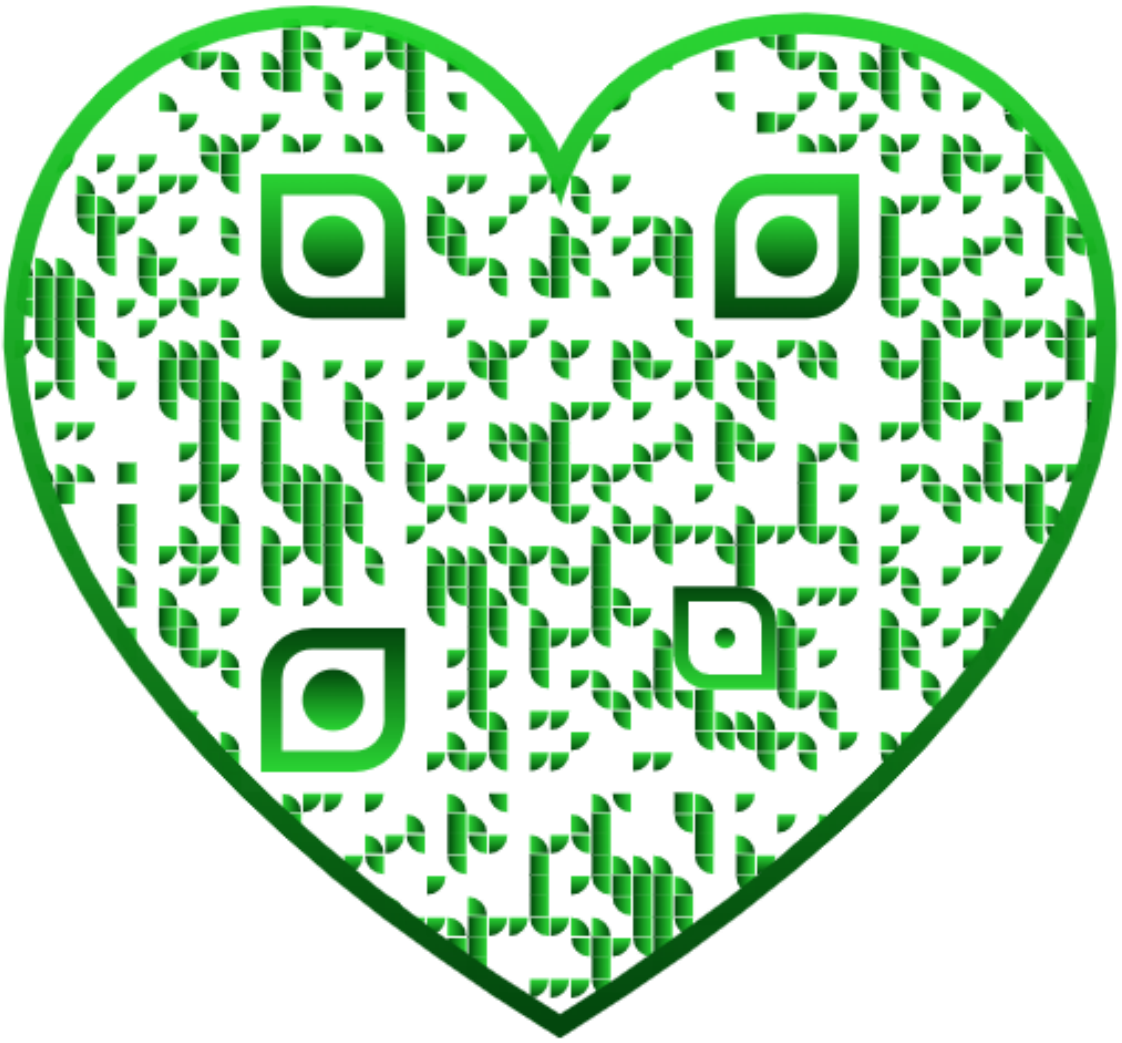


SATANISM

A READER



Satanism

A Reader

Edited by

Per Faxneld and Johan Nilsson

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Introduction

Per Faxneld and Johan Nilsson

“I’ve been around for a long, long years . . . ”

Satanism is a phenomenon that has existed as a prominent trope since very beginning of Christianity,[1] when the Church Fathers entertained fantasies about people worshipping the Devil and indulging in macabre rituals.[2] In the early modern period, similarly unfounded ideas led to the infamous witch trials, which transpired primarily between 1400 and 1700.[3] In the 1980s and 1990s, what has been labelled a “Satanic Panic” swept the United States and parts of Europe, with (again, unfounded) rumors about secret Satanist networks committing gruesome murders, kidnappings, and ritualistic child abuse.[4] Today, the so-called Pizzagate and QAnon conspiracy theories in the United States again draw on these motifs, this time postulating that left-wing Satanists are secretly manipulating politics and doing nefarious deeds in the shadows.[5]

This book, however, is only indirectly concerned with the purely fictional Satanism of such paranoid fantasies.[6] It does not deal directly with the literary tradition of Satanism either, where Satanists can appear as antagonists (or, more rarely, protagonists) in the plot of a story, or authors express Satanic sympathies in a poem or two. Rather, our selection of source texts focuses on actual, existing Satanic groups, and thinkers of importance to the emergence of a Satanic milieu that forms part of a broader landscape of alternative religion.

Some of the texts do in a sense belong to the above-mentioned categories (e.g., Léo Taxil’s spoof on conspiracy theories, or the quite literary pseudo-histories of Satanism—in fact Satanic tracts in disguise—of Jules Michelet and Stanislaw Przybyszewski), but we have aimed to concentrate on (1) self-

designated Satanic groups and ideologists, (2) groups and ideologists who prominently revere a figure they identify with Satan, even though they may not self-designate as Satanists, and (3) groups and ideologists (mostly excluding, however, literary texts and conspiracy theories) whose re-interpretations of Satan were crucial to the growth of such ideas.

"Stole million man's soul an faith . . . ": Who the Devil Is the Devil?

Before approaching the topic of Satanism, a short introduction to the history of Satan is in order.[7] Many Christian doctrines about Satan are not strictly speaking "biblical," but have evolved through subsequent interpretations of the Bible—especially the exegesis of the early Church Fathers. A complete doctrine on the Devil, then, was developed only gradually and over a fairly long period.[8] Satan is a Hebrew word derived from the root meaning "oppose," "obstruct," or "accuse," later translated into Greek as *diabolos*—"adversary." From the Greek it was translated again, into *diabolus* (Latin) and the English *Devil*. The word Satan can be found in the Old Testament as a noun with this meaning.[9]

Satan as a specific personified being appears in the Book of Job, testing Job's piety by subjecting him to horrible misfortunes. Human suffering was in general seen as God's will at this point, as part of the emphasis on total monotheism among the Jews.[10] However, inter-testamental texts like 1 Enoch, 2 Enoch, Jubilees, and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs presented dualistic ideas about a cosmic conflict between a good power and an evil one. Ideas like these became prominent in Christianity, as can be seen in several places in the New Testament. Christianity's Satan was likely also colored by non-Jewish sources, such as the Persian concept of the struggle between a principle of light, Ahura-Mazda, and a principle of darkness, Ahriman.[11] In the New Testament, Satan deceives humankind into committing sins and causes disease and death but will be defeated when Christ returns. Satan also unsuccessfully tempts Christ (Matthew 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13; Mark 1:12–13), and Christ defeats demons in his role as an exorcist (Mark 1:23–26; Luke 11:14–26).

The Book of Revelation (ca. 90 CE) speaks of a war in heaven, where Michael and the good angels overpower a group of rebellious angels and their

leader (Rev. 12:7–9). Due to the authority awarded this abstruse visionary text, Old Testament passages that did not originally deal with Satan came to be interpreted as doing so. Isaiah 14:12–15 describes the morning star falling from heaven. The original meaning of this passage is obscure, but the apocalyptic writers understood it as depicting how a member of God's court fell from heaven (since angels were often identified with stars in the Old Testament). In the New Testament, there then appeared an account of Satan falling from heaven like lightning (Luke 10:18). Notions of fallen angels in intertestamental literature thus combined with the falling morning star in Isaiah. The Hebrew term for the morning star, *Helel ben-shahar*, was eventually translated into Latin—via the Greek *Phosphoros*—as Lucifer, and in Christian tradition became a common substitute name for Satan.[12]

The most important individual in the establishing of a systematic Christian diabology was Augustine (354–430). He saw the Devil as an angel of evil waging continued war on God after his fall and identified the figure with the serpent that tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden. Since it was the fruit of *knowledge* that Eve was offered by the serpent, this identification would lead to theological ideas about Satan being connected with (forbidden) knowledge. Defined only by what he lacked (goodness, light), divine providence made this figure unwillingly serve the interests of God and man through his actions.[13] In spite of the latter Augustinian assurance, Satan was much feared among the people of Europe through the centuries. Dualistic heretical groups, like the medieval Cathars, held a view of Satan as a truly threatening cosmic adversary who could challenge God's power. Such ideas, a possible solution to the age-old problem of theodicy ("why does a perfectly good and almighty God permit evil?"), flourished in many kinds of popular and learned speculations, and were not limited to "heretics."[14]

In popular contexts, Satan's identity was always variegated.[15] The Satan of European folklore could be rather different from the Satan of the theologians, though no watertight compartments existed between the two. Because of this, Satan functioned as a tool for upholding order as well as, to some degree, subverting it. Most folklore entities are of a more ambivalent nature than the clear-cut good-or-evil division in official Christianity. Satan could therefore at times appear as a helpful spirit in folklore, whom it was possible to turn to for assistance with matters God was unlikely to offer his help with.[16]

The Protestant reformation of the sixteenth century did not drastically alter

the view of Satan, which would be more strongly impacted by the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. Following Martin Luther (1483–1546), reformers removed much that they felt did not have a biblical foundation—but, surprisingly, retained most of the medieval diabology.[17] Later on, Protestantism's emphasis on a direct relationship with God resulted in a gradual shift (with repercussions in Catholicism as well) toward viewing Satan as an *inner* voice tempting the individual—even if this voice ultimately issued forth from a malevolent external spiritual entity. Darren Oldridge contends that due to this notion of Satan targeting the mind, he himself was increasingly seen as a figure with substantial psychological depth. The various renderings of the Faust story from the late sixteenth century—where Satan often has a contemplative, self-examining and analytical disposition—reflect this.[18] All the same, Satan had not been transformed into just an inner voice or a character in erudite fiction by this time, as evidenced by the persecutions of supposed Devil-worshipping witches that were particularly intense circa 1400–1700.[19]

With the scientific revolution and the naturalistic view of the world advocated by scientists like Isaac Newton (1643–1727), God became conceptualized as the architect of the universe and the maker of natural laws. Such an emphasis on fixed processes and laws left little room for diabolical (or divine!) intervention. The small elite of Enlightenment thinkers of coming generations generally distanced themselves from Satan, even when they wanted to retain some type of (distant) God in their worldviews. As such ideas started to spread to the broader layers, Satan slowly faded from public discourse. Partly, this went hand in hand with a general decline in organized religion. Industrialism entailed transition from a rural village-based population to one that mostly dwelled in towns and cities, creating a rupture in the structure of small parishes that had been the foundation of traditional church hegemony. Advances in medical science and increased understanding of what caused natural disasters further limited the areas in which people felt demonic powers were active, as life became more predictable. By the second half of the twentieth century, believing in God while forgoing belief in Satan became a common position among liberal Protestant theologians. However, this development was slow, or simply not forthcoming, in many places—something that applied to an even greater extent to Catholic communities. We can note that the 1907 edition of the *Catholic Encyclopedia* still unequivocally treated the Devil as an external reality. Today, belief in Satan

as a literal entity remains alive and well in several Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox contexts.[20]

As will be seen in the present volume, Satanism draws on the long, rich theological and popular traditions surrounding Satan, often positioning itself in direct relation to the hegemonic diabological discourses of its period. Naturally, Satanism as an open identity only became possible in a time when Christianity's hold on legal systems and social norms had weakened. In that sense, Satanism is a direct product of secularization (understood primarily as the severing of ties between state/public sphere and religion). It can, on the other hand, also be said to exist in the field of tension between secularity and religiosity, as some forms of it (that are geared toward combating Christian influence) would be irrelevant in a hypothetical completely secular society. Other forms, finally, rather represent a type of re-enchantment and self-spirituality in opposition to hegemonic atheist-secularist discourses.

"Pleased to meet you . . .": A Succinct History of Satanism

As already mentioned, the idea that certain evil people, Satanists, actively worship the Devil stretches back to the dawn of Christianity. Actual self-identified, practicing Satanists have, however, not been around for nearly as long.[21] The *words* Satanism and Satanist (in the contemporary sense of people actively venerating the Devil in some way), or their equivalents in other European languages, are not very old either. In fact, they only came into frequent use in the second half of the nineteenth century.[22] The *concept* they denote, on the other hand, is considerably older.

Certain Gnostic groups in late antiquity were painted as devotees of demonic powers in Christian polemics against them. Similarly, heretical Christian sects like the Cathars were unjustly persecuted in the Middle Ages as Satanists, even though they certainly did not revere Satan.[23] In the early modern era, supposed witches were identified as adherents of the Devil and executed. Abortionists and poisoners close to the court of Louis XIV (1638–1715), certain wealthy English rakes, Freemasons, various esotericists in fin-de-siècle France, and many others were also slandered as Devil worshippers. On closer inspection, none of these seem to have been Satanists in any reasonable sense of the term, with the French seventeenth-century example as a possible exception.[24] Accusations of Satanism have been rife, then,

throughout most of Christianity's history. Yet, an enduring and public tradition of practiced Satanism was not instated until 1966, with the founding of the Church of Satan in San Francisco. As the source texts in the present book will demonstrate, however, there were some people who nourished an intense sympathy for the Devil much earlier.

For example, English late eighteenth-century Romantics like William Blake (1757–1827), Percy Shelley (1792–1822), and Lord Byron (1788–1824) admired the heroic individualist Satan they discerned in John Milton's portrayal of the figure in *Paradise Lost* (1667). Though Milton himself almost certainly had not intended his Devil to be a hero, these interpretations of his work led to a type of "literary Satanism" becoming fashionable.[25] In spite of the controversy this created, the radical authors in question seldom extended their "Satanism" beyond occasional outbursts in a text or two. It can all the same be said that the pro-Satanic ideas they propagated came to be established as an enduring strategy of cultural protest.[26] By contrast, the Polish decadent Stanislaw Przybyszewski (1868–1927) was a more consistent Satanist, who made Lucifer the focus of a whole system of thought that he adhered to for a long time—possibly making it feasible to designate him the "first" actual Satanist.[27] The Devil was also popular with nineteenth-century socialists as a symbol of revolt against all the things they detested: monarchs, capitalism, the bourgeoisie, and the church.[28] In this spirit, French historian Jules Michelet (1798–1874) wrote his best-selling book *La Sorcière* ("The Witch," 1862), where he portrayed Devil-worshipping witches as noble proto-socialists.[29] Concurrently, decadent poets like Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867) and visual artists like Félicien Rops (1833–1898) emphasized Satan's connection to sensuality and carnal pleasures, establishing the figure as part of critique against Christian moralism and asceticism.[30]

Among esotericists, one of the first to unmistakably praise Satan was H. P. Blavatsky (1831–1891), chief ideologist of the influential Theosophical Society. Satan does not, however, occupy a central enough position in her system for it to be labelled a form of Satanism as a whole.[31] More ambiguous were the Satanic tendencies in the writings of one of her sources of inspiration, the French occultist Éliphas Lévi (1810–1875),[32] and to an even greater extent those in the work of US Freemason Albert Pike (1809–1891).[33] English magician Aleister Crowley (1875–1947) could at times be quite sympathetic toward Satan, but never made this a crucial feature of his

cosmology.[34] None of these famous occultists would in any manner have accepted the label Satanist.

The obscure Danish occultist Ben Kadosh (Carl William Hansen, 1872–1936) was on the other hand happy to openly declare himself a "Luciferian" and published a pamphlet propagating explicit Satanism in 1906. The Satanic group he attempted to create, if it was indeed realized in the manner he intended, was likely very small.[35] Not until the 1920s is it possible to find anything resembling a proper organization with Satanic leanings, the German 1920s esoteric order Fraternitas Saturni. However, in spite of viewing Satan as an initiator and celebrating Luciferian masses, how "Satanic" this secretive group actually was remains unclear.[36] Much more explicit in professing a type of "Satanism" was the Satanic temple (a term she herself used) operated by Maria de Naglowska in 1930s Paris. Here, though, the aim was an integration of Satan and God, and ultimately God appears to have been the supreme object of reverence.[37] Holding rituals that were open to the public, with the group itself calling them Satanic, was nevertheless a pioneering move.

Though often influential on later Satanic developments, none of these groups or individuals founded long-lived Satanic traditions. Fraternitas Saturni still exists, but the old "Satanic" ideas appear to play no significant part in today's activities.[38] Blavatsky's sympathy for the Devil never had any significant influence on the Theosophical Society as a whole.[39] Kadosh's ideas form the foundation for a small revival group in Scandinavia, but they have no direct continuity with the circle he (possibly) founded.[40]

Satanism as a more or less fixed and distinct strategy for cultural critique has been around since the Romantic period. As a religious practice or coherent system of thought, on the other hand, Satanism did not exist any earlier than around the year 1900, when pioneers like Przybyszewski and Kadosh appeared. Strands of Satanic thought can, as we have seen, be found in a series of instances (e.g., in the work of central esoteric thinkers like Lévi, Blavatsky, and Crowley) prior to this, and some of these early ideas remain (directly or indirectly) influential today. Several of the source texts in the present volume derive from this early phase in the history of Satanism.

The next phase was initiated with the establishment of an enduring, open Satanic tradition when Anton Szandor LaVey (1930–1997) founded the Church of Satan in San Francisco in 1966. Claiming a background as a police

photographer, carny, and lover of the young Marilyn Monroe, it must certainly be said that LaVey was highly colorful and knew how to spin a good yarn. Many of these claims were later challenged, but their veracity may be somewhat beside the point in terms of LaVey's legend and methods. With his charismatic personality, he soon attracted followers (including, briefly, Sammy Davis Jr. and Jayne Mansfield) and media attention to his church. In 1969, *The Satanic Bible* presented LaVey's worldview to the public. Satan, to him, was a symbol of humanity's carnal nature, not a spiritual entity. LaVeyan Satanism can be characterized as a blend of Epicureanism, elitism, and streetwise cynicism, that he himself would cheekily describe as "Ayn Rand with trappings."[41] Within this atheist and materialist framework, ritual and magic mostly function as psychodrama and self-therapy—even if LaVey also draws on certain fringe science theories (e.g., those of Wilhem Reich). Fairly soon, LaVey grew tired of being a public figure. He stopped hosting open rituals, withdrew from the media, and ended the organizational system with local "grottos" across the country.[42]

Around 1967, a group calling themselves The Process Church of the Final Judgement began employing Satanic symbolism—possibly after an encounter with Anton LaVey. Emerging from British Scientology, The Process had started out as a type of psychotherapy cult in the mid-1960s but quickly evolved in a more religious direction. Its theology was based on the universe having three gods—Jehovah, Lucifer, and Satan, with Christ functioning as a unifier of these powers (none of which were evil). Every human embodied one or two of the principles, and the long-term goal was integrating these divided forces of the universe. In a manner similar to the case of Maria de Naglowska's 1930s Satanic temple in Paris, it is thus a complicated question if we are dealing with Satanism in a strict sense here. An actively proselytizing movement, The Process gained high visibility. In 1974, however, all Satanic elements were removed, and the group changed its name.[43]

The first major splinter group from the Church of Satan appeared in 1975, when LaVey's right-hand man Michael Aquino (1946–2019) left the church and formed the Temple of Set. Rejecting LaVey's atheist approach, the Temple revered what they saw as the original Prince of Darkness, the Egyptian god Set, as an actual conscious entity. Aquino, a high-ranking military officer and assistant professor in political science, aimed to create a serious esoteric academy completely unlike the carnivalesque mischief of the

Church of Satan.[44] Postulating literal self-deification as their ultimate goal, the Temple drew liberally on the techniques of various older esoteric currents. Even though he preferred the designation Set to Satan for his patron, Aquino became the new #1 public Satanist in the 1980s and appeared on talk shows like *Oprah* and *Geraldo*. As part of the period's rumor panic surrounding Satanism, created by fundamentalist Christians and dubious psychotherapists, Aquino was suspected of so-called Satanic Ritual Abuse of children. He was almost immediately acquitted.[45]

The Temple of Set's esoteric-initiatory approach to the dark side would influence several other groups, among them Sweden's Dragon Rouge (founded in 1989). Centered around the symbol of the Red Dragon (explicitly identified as the same entity Christians call Satan),[46] the members of this order also strived toward self-deification in a literal sense. Dragon Rouge moreover made extensive use of the work of Kenneth Grant (e.g., the *Typhonian Trilogies*, 1972–2002), an older exponent of a spirituality focused on sinister, forbidding entities, albeit one where Satan, as such, did not really take center stage.[47]

In the 1990s, LaVey published two new books and started granting interviews again. This coincided with the early internet era—which caused an explosion of interest in Satanism, as adherents could conveniently access information and interact globally.[48] Theistic varieties of Satanism now became more visible, with figures like New York City's Diane Vera (pseudonym, date of birth unknown) rising to online prominence. Parallel to this, the internet also provided opportunities for new versions of atheistic Satanism, for example, the Satanic Reds, a group that combined their syncretistic "dark doctrine" with dialectical materialism.[49]

Possibly founded already in the 1970s, and becoming visible in the 1980s, the early 1990s saw the extreme UK Satanic group The Order of the Nine Angles become one of the most debated phenomena in the Satanic milieu.[50] Advocating human sacrifice, crime, and the infiltration of extremist political groups as part of their Satanic curriculum, this order pushed the boundaries of what was accepted among Satanists. Many veterans of the earlier strictly law-abiding Satanic milieu therefore attempted to counteract what they saw as a dangerous ideological turn.[51]

The early 1990s was also the time when the Nordic Black Metal scene coalesced, combining extreme music with even more extreme religious ideas.

In this very different type of primitive theistic Satanism, worship of "evil" constituted the primary tenet. Church arsons, grave desecrations, and murders followed in its trails, again causing concern in the milieu over the new, strongly anti-social forms of Satanism.[52] The mid-1990s moreover witnessed the establishment of the Swedish organization subsequently known as the Temple of the Black Light. Its cosmology was inspired by ancient Gnosticism and postulated that the material universe was created by an evil god from whose fetters we can be liberated with Satan's aid.[53] Drawing on this and other sources, the American Michael W. Ford (1976–) founded several organizations and started publishing texts on his exceedingly eclectic Satanic system in 2003, benefitting from print-on-demand publishing models that had emerged at the time.[54]

After LaVey's death in 1997, the Church of Satan is now led by Peter H. Gilmore (b. 1958). Possibly as a response to the many new forms of theistic Satanism, the present administration has underscored the materialist and atheist elements in LaVey's texts, distancing themselves even further from the esoteric roots of Satanism. Their position as the largest and most well-known Satanic organization was challenged in 2013, when the Satanic Temple achieved notoriety and acclaim for their theatrical, often satirical, Satanic social activism in support of secularity, anti-racism, and women's and LGBTQ + rights. Quickly gaining thousands of members and worldwide fame, the atheist Satanic Temple's success demonstrates the persistent explosive power of Satan as a symbol.[55]

"When I saw it was time for a change . . . ": Scholarship on Satanism

The relationship between the larger Satanic (or Satanism-related) organizations and academia was initially quite unproblematic, even harmonious. The 1970s saw the publication of a number of smaller studies, primarily by sociologists.[56] Things occasionally turned sour, however, from the mid-1980s onward, with conflicts involving individual scholars that groups felt were misrepresenting them or conducting research in dishonest ways (e.g., the disputes between the Church of Satan and Satanism studies pioneer James R. Lewis—whom they famously designated a "hackademic"—and the 1983 row over Gini Graham Scott's book *The Magicians* about the

Temple of Set, which ended up being withdrawn after a lawsuit).[57] This led to some difficulties with gaining access to leaders and gatherings during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Around that time a new generation of scholars, especially in Scandinavia, started conducting research on the topic, and gradually the partially lost trust was (mostly) regained and a form of respectful reciprocity instated.[58]

The aforementioned James R. Lewis (1949–2022) should be considered one of the field's founding fathers, together with his fellow American Gordon J. Melton (b. 1942), and the Italian sociologist Massimo Introvigne (b. 1955). All three can be characterized as highly productive scholars with a wide-ranging interest in new religious movements, and their work was crucial in establishing the topic as an important one to study, and for integrating it into this broader field. They also laid the empirical foundations for future scholarship. A series of Scandinavian PhD dissertations in the 2000s were devoted to Satanism and related topics, establishing this geographical region as a central one for this academic field. Here for example the dissertations by Asbjørn Dyrendal (Norway, 2003), Kennet Granholm (Finland, 2005), Jesper Aagaard Petersen (Norway, 2011), and Per Faxneld (Sweden 2014, republished by Oxford University Press in 2017) can be mentioned.[59] Of course, important work was being done elsewhere as well at this time, for example Ruben van Luijk's 2013 dissertation in the Netherlands (republished by Oxford University Press in 2016).

Scandinavia being a center for Satanism studies led to the organizing of an international Satanism conference in Trondheim, Norway, in 2009 (a selection of papers from this conference were later collected in the 2013 Oxford University Press volume *The Devil's Party*, eds. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen), and again in Stockholm, Sweden, in 2011.

As mentioned, Satanism can be viewed as part of a broader, antinomian spiritual phenomenon, which has been given labels like "dark spirituality"[60] or "Left-hand Path."[61] Two groups themselves employing the latter designation have been studied by Finnish scholar of religions Kennet Granholm. After his above-mentioned doctoral dissertation (2005) about Dragon Rouge, Granholm went on to study the Temple of Set.[62] Granholm, no longer active as a scholar, made valuable contributions by conducting fieldwork and focusing on lived religiosity in a milieu that has too often only been studied through its texts.

The best and most comprehensive broad histories of Satanism in history as well as contemporary times are *The Invention of Satanism* (2015) by Asbjørn Dyredal, James R. Lewis, and Jesper Aagaard Petersen, Massimo Introvigne's *Satanism: A Social History* (2016) and Ruben van Luijk's aforementioned *Children of Lucifer: The Origins of Modern Religious Satanism* (2016).[63] Most pre-2000 articles of significance treating Satanism can be found in the massive collection *The Encyclopedic Sourcebook of Satanism* (eds. Jesper Aa. Petersen and James R. Lewis, 2008). Two other collected volumes, *Contemporary Religious Satanism* (ed. Petersen, 2009) and the already mentioned *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity* (eds. Faxneld and Petersen, 2013) collate contributions from the majority of today's key scholars.

For debunking of accusations of Satanism in historical times, see Gareth Medway's *Lure of the Sinister* (2001), Evelyn Lord's *The Hellfire Clubs: Sex, Satanism, and Secret Societies* (2010), and Lynn Wood Mollenauer's *Strange Revelations: Magic, Poison, and Sacrilege in Louis XIV's France* (2007).[64] Satanism in literature has been the subject of quite extensive research, with some key works being Max Milner's huge *Le diable dans la littérature française* (1960), Hannes Vatter's *The Devil in English Literature* (1978), and Peter A. Schock's *Romantic Satanism* (2003). Satanism in, and related to, literature has also been studied in several more recent works.[65]

Black Metal, though not always with a primary focus on its Satanic elements, is treated in a series of scholarly studies, like Keith Kahn-Harris' *Extreme Metal: Music and Culture on the Edge* (2007), Christopher Thompson's *Norges Våpen: Cultural Memory and Uses of History in Norwegian Black Metal* (diss., Uppsala University, 2019), Mikael Sarelin's *Krigaren och transvestiten: Gestaltningar av mörker och maskuliniteter i finländsk black metal* (diss., Åbo Academy, 2013), and several articles.[66] There is also a rather problematic Swedish musicological monograph by Thomas Bossius (2003), which uses highly unrepresentative informants—namely, Christian (!) Black Metal bands (a selection that is most likely related to the author's own strongly Christian background).[67] The best-known popular book on the topic is Michael Moynihan and Didrik Søderlind's *Lords of Chaos,* which offers several interviews of relevance for scholars. This is also the case with two later books, Jon Jefferson Klingberg and Ika Johannesson's *Blod, eld, död* (2011) and Håvard Rem's *Infødte skrik: Norsk*

svartmetall (2010).[68]

"Hope you guess my name . . . ": Defining Satanism

The debate over how to define Satanism, or if the term is even suitable to use, has raged for at least as long as the field of academic Satanism studies has existed. Some early, highly dubious attempts highlighted a supposed immorality/anti-morality or antisocial behavior as core traits and criteria for something to be classified as Satanism. Such an approach largely reflects the aforementioned "Satanic Panic" rumor panics of the 1980s, and Christian evangelical concerns over claimed dangers of the "occult." Its proponents are generally united by not having done any fieldwork among Satanists and having limited knowledge of actual Satanic primary sources.[69]

Coming from a different angle, Kennet Granholm has expressed concern with the negative connotations of the term "Satanism" in the eyes of the public, suggesting it should be discarded as an academic label—even for groups that consider themselves Satanists, and/or who clearly make Satan their primary figure of reverence.[70] This possibly stems from his own fieldwork having almost exclusively taken place in Dragon Rouge and the Temple of Set, groups that both explicitly identify their central symbol (the Red Dragon and Set, respectively) with Satan, and frequently employ symbols like the inverted pentagram, yet simultaneously distance themselves from the term Satanism.[71] As an alternative to this designation, Granholm therefore proposes the more inclusive term Left-hand Path, something he characterizes as a "milieu of 'dark spirituality' that includes many forms of modern Satanism" and is "informed by the specific combination of following three discourses": the ideology of individualism, the goal of self-deification and antinomianism.[72]

The editors of this book do not, like Granholm, think it is inherently problematic to use the term Satanism as an analytical academic category, regardless of the negative connotations it has for parts of the public (and, lest we forget, for some of our academic colleagues). In fact, the negative connotations, and how practitioners negotiate them in the field of tension between respectability and transgression, are crucial aspects of what makes the phenomenon interesting and relevant to study. It could be said that this dimension is part and parcel of why the study of a marginal phenomenon like

Satanism nonetheless has important things to tell us about broader societal and historical developments. Naturally, it is of importance how practitioners choose to self-define, but this does not imply that emic (insider) terminology is necessarily always preferable or more clarifying for scholars. It is also an analytical advantage to be able to follow discursive shifts over time related to a specific symbol like Satan, a task that will be all the more elusive if the content and meaning of such discourses are taken to always center around the same axis of individualism, self-deification, and antinomianism. A potential risk could also lie in excessive inclusivity, since the Left-hand Path shares many of its core values with the self-religion of a broad environment of contemporary new religious movements and unorganized spiritual seekers.[73]

An important thing about studying Satanism is to analyze the mechanisms at play when a central symbol in Christian and post-Christian culture, Satan, is being re-negotiated. Eliminating Satan(ism) from the academic terminology because *certain* groups are adamant they have transcended this symbol in its strictly Abrahamitic conceptualization (and may now focus more on other mythological equivalents of Satan, e.g., the direful Egyptian god Set) would obfuscate an important dimension of scholarly work on other material.[74] Ultimately, it of course needs to be remembered that any definition of Satanism is primarily a tool for conducting research. We should therefore be wary of rigid, essentialist definitions and flexible enough to potentially operate with different formulations depending on what type of study we are conducting in a given moment.

To nuance the term Satanism somewhat, it can be used in two senses: *sensu stricto* and *sensu lato*.[75] The former (strict) sense refers to a system of thought in which Satan is celebrated in a prominent position.[76] A "prominent position" signifies that Satan is the only or the foremost among the entities or symbols revered. If this is not the case, the group or individual in question may still hold certain views that constitute a form of Satanism, but their ideology *as a whole* cannot be defined thus. The term "system" designates anything from very simple constructs to highly sophisticated doctrines. This dimension of the definition facilitates excluding, for example, a person who lauds Lucifer in a single poem from this more strictly defined category. Such an act does not make anyone a Satanist in the strict sense, any more than composing a single piece in praise of Christ would make someone a Christian.

Satanism *sensu lato*, on the other hand, entails celebrations of the Devil

used as a discursive strategy in a demarcated and restricted manner. Examples include socialists employing Lucifer as a symbol of revolution, and different varieties of purely literary veneration of Satan. It would also encompass groups and thinkers who make positive reinterpretations of Satan, yet do not put these ideas center stage in their work or ideology. Around one-third of the source texts in this book consist of material representing Satanism *sensu lato* (that is, it is not part of a system of thought where celebrating Satan is a central theme), while the other two-thirds constitute examples of Satanism *sensu stricto*. The more recent texts from the former category (*sensu lato*) can, in several cases, be said to belong to what Granholm calls the "Left-hand path milieu," detailed above. In that context, Satan is only one of several antinomian, sinister figures from various mythologies that are put to use.

"But what's puzzling you . . . ": How to Use This book

Today, Satanism is being introduced and analyzed as part of undergraduate and graduate university courses across the world. Why is it a popular topic to teach? While never a numerically significant religion, Satanism's controversial and confrontational character makes it an excellent case study for discussing broader methodological and theoretical issues. As mentioned above, it also functions well as an entry point to analyzing more general developments and tensions in the religious landscape.[77] Recently, entire courses have been devoted to Satanism in, for example, Sweden, attracting huge numbers of students. It is clearly an engaging topic for students.

This book thus grew from a clear need for a Satanism reader to use as a course book in teaching. We have also aimed to produce a volume that will be useful for students writing a paper or thesis on Satanism. In such a situation, a selection of representative source texts will help them orient themselves in the field and decide what type of Satanism they find most interesting. The detailed introductions to the texts, written by leading specialists on the figures and groups in question, will moreover help any reader understand the context of the varieties of Satanism, and the source texts they have given rise to. Finally, the book can also be read as a succinct chronological overview of the development of Satanism, with the closeness to the phenomenon itself that only actual source texts can provide.

In order to facilitate usability and easy access, the chapters in this volume

all have the same structure. Every source-text has an introduction that gives an account of its historical background, specific origins, and impact. First, the texts' authors and their worldviews are presented, and the origins, genre, and purpose of the text are detailed. The content of the texts is then discussed and contextualized through other works by the same author and similar ideas from his or her intellectual milieu. Finally, comments are offered on the reception history and impact of the texts.

The material is presented in chronological order. When selecting what source texts to include, we have chosen to focus on a number of historical texts that were crucial to the development of Satanism. The earliest esoteric texts, by Eliphas Lévi and H. P. Blavatsky, do not qualify as being representative of actual Satanism in the narrower sense (called *sensu lato* above). They were, however, significant steps toward the later, fully positive understanding of the figure of Satan in an esoteric context. We have not included purely literary texts, for example, those written by the "Romantic Satanists" in England during the early nineteenth century, as such material primarily forms a prehistory to Satanism *sensu lato* and would make the book too voluminous. Stanislaw Przybyszewski is, in one sense, a "literary" Satanist, but he is a special case due to the fact that he seems to have been the first person to develop a sustained system of thought centered around Satan, and also referred to himself as a Satanist (something the Romantic Satanists never did—this was a label attached to them by others). With one exception, we have also forgone conspiracy theories about Satanism, prioritizing insider texts instead of outsider fantasies about Satanism. Several of the texts (e.g., Crowley's "Hymn to Lucifer," Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, or Kenneth Grant's *Vinum Sabbati*) included display a positive interpretation of Satan yet have been penned by individuals or groups who cannot be labelled Satanists. Such material is included in order to demonstrate the fuzzy borders of the Satanic milieu, and how it resources and is resourced by adjacent phenomena in the field of alternative spirituality.

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[1] The quotes in the subheadings are taken from the 1968 Rolling Stones song "Sympathy for the Devil." The partly idiosyncratic spelling and syntax follows the original.

[2] David Frankfurter, *Evil Incarnate: Rumors of Demonic Conspiracy and Ritual Abuse in History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006). Jeffrey Burton Russel, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977).

[3] Frankfurter, *Evil Incarnate*. Richard Kieckhefer, *European Witch Trials: Their Foundations in Popular and Learned Culture, 1300–1500* (Berkeley: University of Californa Press, 1976). Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds., *The Athlone History of Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*, vol. 4: *The Period of the Witch Trials* (London: Athlone, 1999).

[4] Gareth J. Medway, *Lure of the Sinister: The Unnatural History of Satanism* (New York, London:

New York University Press, 2001). Titus Hjelm et al., "Satanism and Satanism Scares in the Contemporary World," special issue, *Social Compass* 56:4 (2009) pp. 499–576.

[5] Amanda Garry et al., "QAnon Conspiracy Theory: Examining its Evolution and Mechanisms of Radicalization," *Journal for Deradicalization* (Spring 2021) pp. 152–216.

[6] Conspiracy theory discourse on Satanism is, on the other hand, not disconnected from actual, practiced forms—see, e.g., the chapters on Taxil and Kadosh in the present volume.

[7] The classic in-depth overview of the development of the figure of Satan is Jeffrey Burton Russell's four-volume study *The Devil*. Its treatment of twentieth-century Satanism (1986, pp. 253–257) is marred by a Catholic bias, however, and its discussion of literary Satanism (1986, pp. 168–213) also leaves something to be desired. Aside from this, it is still a singular and essential work. Darren Oldridge's *The Devil: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) is an excellent condensed alternative.

[8] Jeffrey B. Russell, *Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986) p. 172.

[9] Jeffrey B. Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977) pp. 189–190.

[10] J. M. Evans, *Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1968) p. 34; Russell, *The Devil*, pp. 198–200; Russell, *Satan*, pp. 27–29.

[11] Russell, *The Devil*, p. 121.

[12] Evans, *Paradise Lost*, p. 34; Russell, *The Devil*, pp. 195–197. C.f. Gareth J. Medway, *Lure of the Sinister: The Unnatural History of Satanism* (New York, London: New York University Press, 2001) pp. 53–54.

[13] Oldridge, *The Devil*, p. 27.

[14] Oldridge, *The Devil*, pp. 8, 31. On the Cathars see Yuri Stroyanov, *The Other God: Dualist Religions from Antiquity to the Cathar Heresy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).

[15] Oldridge, *The Devil*, p. 29; Stroyanov, *The Other God*.

[16] Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, *Människan och djävulen: en studie kring form, motiv och funktion i folklig tradition* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1991) pp. 286–287; Jan Wall, " 'Wilt tu nu falla nedh och tilbiedhia migh': Folkets tro och kyrkans lära om djävulen," in *Djävulen: Seminarium den 13 november 1990*, ed. Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, IF-rapport nr 13 (Åbo: Folkloristiska institutionen, Åbo akademi, 1992).

[17] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, pp. 26, 30, 53–54.

[18] Oldridge, *The Devil*, p. 35.

[19] Kieckhefer, *European Witch Trials*. Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons* (Sussex and London: Sussex University Press and Heinemann Educational Books, 1975). Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, *The Athlone History of Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*, vol. 4.

[20] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, p. 260; Oldridge *The Devil*, pp. 40–45.

[21] For some recent historical overviews of Satanism, including the development of Satanism as a self-designation, see Ruben van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer: The Origins of Modern Religious Satanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015). Massimo Introvigne, *Satanism: A Social History* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2016).

[22] Medway, *Lure of the Sinister*, p. 9; but see also Mikael Häll, "It Is Better to Believe in the Devil," in *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) pp. 26–28 for a Swedish example predating this by a couple of hundred years.

[23] Stoyanov, *The Other God*.

[24] Medway, *Lure of the Sinister*, pp. 70–99; Per Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar: Satanism i äldre tid*

(Sundbyberg: Ouroboros, 2006) pp. 1–21, 62–84, 125–134. On the French court scandal, see also Anne Somerset, *The Affair of the Poisons: Murder, Infanticide and Satanism at the Court of Louis XIV* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003); Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, pp. 45–62.

[25] For a problematisation of the straightforwardly orthodox reading of Milton, see Neil Forsyth, *The Satanic Epic* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).

[26] Peter A. Schock, *Romantic Satanism: Myth and the Historical Moment in Blake, Shelley, and Byron* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

[27] Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar*, pp. 140–149; Per Faxneld, "Witches, Anarchism, and Evolutionism: Stanislaw Przybyszewski's fin-de-siècle Satanism and the Demonic Feminine," in *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aa. Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) pp. 53–77.

[28] Per Faxneld, "The Devil Is Red: Socialist Satanism in Nineteenth-Century Europe," *Numen* 60:5 (2013) pp. 528–558; van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, 116–112.

[29] Per Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism: Lucifer as the Liberator of Woman in Nineteenth-Century Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University press, 2017) pp. 197ff.; van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, 122–126.

[30] Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism*, pp. 286ff.; van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, pp. 151–163.

[31] Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar*, pp. 108–116; Per Faxneld, "Blavatsky the Satanist: Luciferianism in Theosophy and Its Feminist Implications," *Temenos* 48:2 (2012) pp. 203–230. Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism*, pp. 109–142.

[32] Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar*, pp. 101–107. van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, pp. 127–145. Julian Strube, "The 'Baphomet' of Eliphas Lévi: Its Meaning and Historical Context," *Correspondences: Journal for the Study of Esotericism* 4 (2016) pp. 37–79.

[33] van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, pp. 221f., 264f. Introvigne, *Satanism*, pp. 163–165, 168–172.

[34] Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar*, pp. 150–155. Introvigne, *Satanism*, pp. 239–246. van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, pp. 306–314. Asbjørn Dyrendal, "Satan and the Beast: The Influence of Aleister Crowley on Modern Satan- Ism," in *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism: An Anthology of Critical Studies*, ed. Henrik Bogdan and Martin P. Starr (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[35] Per Faxneld, "The Strange Case of Ben Kadosh: A Luciferian Pamphlet from 1906 and Its Current Renaissance," *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism* 11:1 (2011) pp. 1–22. Per Faxneld, " 'In Communication with the Powers of Darkness': Satanism in Turn-of-the-Century Denmark, and Its Use as a Legitimating Device in Present-Day Esotericism," in *Occultism in a Global Perspective*, ed. Henrik Bogdan and Gordan Djurdjevic (Durham, NC: Acumen, 2013).

[36] Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar*, pp. 177–188. van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, 301–303, 305f. Introvigne, *Satanism*, pp. 281–284. Hans Thomas Hakl, "Fraternitas Saturni," in *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism* (accessed June 25, 2021.

[37] Hans Thomas Hakl, "The Theory and Practice of Sexual Magic Exemplified in Four Magical Groups in the Early Twentieth Century," in *Hidden Intercourse: Eros and Sexuality in the History of Western Esotericism* (Leiden: Brill, 2008) pp. 465–478. Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar*, pp. 189–194. van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, pp. 300–302, 305f. Introvigne, *Satanism*, pp. 265–277.

[38] http://fraternitas.de/home.htm (accessed June 25, 2021).

[39] Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism*, pp. 109–142.

[40] Faxneld, "The Strange Case of Ben Kadosh." On Satanism and the construction of tradition, see also Per Faxneld, "Secret Lineages and *De Facto* Satanists: Anton LaVey's Use of Esoteric Tradition," *Contemporary Esotericism*, ed. Egil Asprem and Kennet Granholm (London: Equinox, 2013) pp. 72–90.

[41] Kim Klein, "Witches Are Back, and So Are Satanists," *The Washington Post* (May 10, 1970) p.

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[42] van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, pp. 344–354.

[43] William S. Bainbridge, *Satan's Power: A Deviant Psychotherapy Cult* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978). Bainbridge, "Social Construction from Within: Satan's Process," in *The Satanism Scare*, ed. Joel T. Richardson, Joel Best, and David G. Bromley (New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1991).

[44] Mattias Gardell, *Gods of the Blood: The Pagan Revival and White Separatism* (London: Duke University Press, 2003) pp. 290–292, 389. Jesper Aagard Petersen, "Satanists and Nuts: the Role of Schisms in Modern Satanism," in *How Religions Divide*, ed. James R. Lewis and Sarah Lewis (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009) pp. 218–247.

[45] Richardson et al., *The Satanism Scare* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1991); Michael Aquino, *Extreme Prejudice: The Presidio "Satanic Abuse" Scam* (San Francisco: Self-published, 2014).

[46] For an example of the Dragon Rouge's views on Satan and evil, see Thomas Karlsson, *Qabalah, Qliphoth and Goetic Magic* (Jacksonville, OR: Ajna, 2009) pp. 48–65.

[47] Instead Grant's works reveal a fascination with ancient Egyptian deities, as well as with Hinduism and African religions like that of the Yoruba people. See the discussion in the chapter on Grant in the present volume.

[48] James R. Lewis, "Who Serves Satan? A Demographic and Ideological Profile." *Marburg Journal of Religion* 6:2 (2001). Jesper Aagaard Petersen, "From Book to Bit: Enacting Satanism Online," in *Contemporary Esotericism*, ed. Kennet Granholm and Egil Asprem (London: Equinox, 2013).

[49] Introvigne, *Satanism*. Jesper Petersen, "Modern Satanism: Dark Doctrines and Black Flames," in *Controversial New Religions*, ed. J. R. Lewis and J. Aa. Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) pp. 437–440.

[50] Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun* (New York: New York University Press, 2003). Jeffrey Kaplan, "Order of Nine Angles," in *In Encyclopedia of White Power*, ed. Jeffrey Kaplan (AltaMira, 2000). Jacob Senholt, "Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition: Political Esotericism and the Convergence of Radical Islam, Satanism, and National Socialism in the Order of Nine Angles," in *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[51] On criticism of the ONA from within the Satanic milieu, see Jesper Aagaard Petersen, "Binary Satanism: The Construction of Community in a Digital World," in *The Encylopedic Sourcebook of Satanism*, ed. James R. Lewis and Jesper Aagard Petersn (Prometheus Books, 2008).

[52] Michael Moynihan and Didrik Søderlind, *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground* (Venice, CA: Feral House, 1998).

[53] Benjamin Hedge Olsen, "At the Threshold of the Inverted Womb: Anti-Cosmic Satanism and Radical Freedom," *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* 4:2 (2014). The Temple of the Black Light declined to have their material included in the present volume.

[54] For a biography of Ford (likely provided by himself), see: https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/56374.Michael_W_Ford.

[55] Manon Hedenborg White and Fredrik Gregorius, "The Satanic Temple: Secularist Activism and Occulture in the American Political Landscape," *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* 10:1 (2019) pp. 89–110; Joseph P. Laycock, *Speak of the Devil: How the Satanic Temple Is Changing the Way We Talk About Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[56] Marcello Truzzi, "The Occult Revival as Popular Culture: Some Random Observations on the Old and the Nouveau Witch," *The Sociological Quarterly* 13:1 (1972) pp. 16–36. Marcello Truzzi, "Towards a Sociology of the Occult: Notes on Modern Witchcraft," in *Religious Movements in Contemporary America*, ed. Irving I. Zaretsky and Mark P. Leone (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University

Press, 1974) pp. 628–645. Edward J. Moody, "Magical Therapy: An Anthropological Investigation of Contemporary Satanism," in *Religious Movements in Contemporary America*, ed. Irving I. Zaretsky and Mark P. Leone (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974) pp. 355–382. Randall. H. Alfred, "The Church of Satan," in *The New Religious Consciousness*, ed. Charles Y. Glock and Robert N. Bellah (Berkeley: University of California Press. Plexus, 1976) pp. 180–204.

[57] Stephen E. Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2012) pp. 224f.

[58] An example of this is that Blanche Barton, a leading figure in the Church of Satan, chose to interview several scholars for her own recent book *We Are Satanists: The History and Future of the Church of Satan* (Aperient Press, 2021), thus making the interviewers the interviewees and attesting to generally improved relations between practitioners and academia.

[59] Moreover, Fredrik Gregorius published a short book on Satanism in Sweden in 2006 (*Satanismen i Sverige*, Lund: Sitra Ahra), and Per Faxneld published a Swedish book on the early history of Satanism in 2006 (*Mörkrets apostlar: Satanism i äldre tid*, Sundbyberg: Ouroboros).

[60] Per Faxneld and Jesper Aa. Petersen, eds., *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012)

[61] Kennet Granholm, "The Left-Hand Path and Post-Satanism: The Temple of Set and the Evolution of Satanism," in *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) pp. 209–228. Kennet Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment: The Historical, Sociological, and Discursive Contexts of Contemporary Esoteric Magic* (Leiden: Brill Publications, 2014).

[62] Kennet Granholm, "Embracing Others Than Satan: The Multiple Princes of Darkness in the Left-Hand Path Milieu," in *Contemporary Religious Satanism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Jesper Aa. Petersen (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009) pp. 85–101. Kennet Granholm, "Left-Hand Path Magic and Animal Rights," *Nova Religio* 12:4 (2009) pp. 28–49. Kennet Granholm, "Approaches to Nature in Contemporary Left-Hand Path Magic," in *Esotericism and Nature*, ed. Arthur Versluis et al (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010) pp. 151–163. Kennet Granholm, "The Rune-Gild: Heathenism, Traditionalism, and the Left-Hand Path," *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* 1:1 (2010) pp. 95–115. Kennet Granholm, "Dragon Rouge: Left-Hand Path Magic with a Neopagan Flavour," *Aries* 12:1 (2012) pp. 131–156. Kennet Granholm, "Metal and Magic: The Intricate Relationship Between the Metal Band Therion and the Magic Order Dragon Rouge," in *Brill Handbook of New Religions and Cultural Production*, ed. Carole Cusack and Alex Norman (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

[63] Asbjørn Dyrendal, James R. Lewis, and Jesper Aagaard Petersen, eds. *The Invention of Satanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016). Massimo Introvigne, *Satanism: A Social History* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2016). Ruben van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer: The Origins of Modern Religious Satanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[64] Gareth J. Medway, *Lure of the Sinister: The Unnatural History of Satanism* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2001). Evelyn Lord, *The Hell-Fire Clubs: Sex, Satanism and Secret Societies* (London: Yale University Press, 2008). Lynn Wood Mollenauer, *Strange Revelations: Magic, Poison and Sacrilege in Louis XIV's France* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007).

[65] Bernd U. Schipper, "From Milton to Modern Satanism: The History of the Devil and the Dynamics Between Religion and Literature," *Journal of Religion in Europe* 3:3 (2010) pp. 103–124. van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*. Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism*. Introvigne, *Satanism*. Asbjørn Dyrendal, James R. Lewis, and Jesper Aagaard Petersen, eds. *The Invention of Satanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[66] Kennet Granholm, "Ritual Black Metal: Popular Music as Occult Meditation and Practice," *Correspondences* 1:1 (2013) pp. 5–33. Kennet Granholm, " 'Sons of Northern Darkness': Heathen

Influences in Black Metal and Neo-folk Music," *Correspondences* 1:1 (2013) pp. 5–33. Per Faxneld, "Kom, ondska, bliv mitt goda: Black Metal-nyreligiositet och motdiskursens ordning," *Din: Tidsskrift for religion og kultur* 17:1 (2015) pp. 79–80. Gry Mørk, ' "With My Art I Am the Fist in the Face of God": On Old-school Black Metal," in *Contemporary Religious Satanism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Jesper Aa. Petersen (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009) pp. 171–198. Per Faxneld, "Bleed for the Devil: Ritualized Self-Harm as Transgressive Practice in Contemporary Satanism, and the Re-enchantement of Late Modernity," *Alternative Spirituality and Religion Review* 6:2 (2015) pp. 165–196. Wachenfeldt and Thorgersen, "When Hell Freezes Over—Black Metal: Emancipatory Cosmopolitanism and/or Egoistic Protectionism," *Music, Education, and Religion: Intersections and Entanglements* (2019) pp. 208–222. Wachenfeldt and Thorgersen, " 'You Who Hate God': Investing in Love and Hate through the Sound of Satan," *Difference and Division in Music Education* (2020) pp. 93–107.

[67] Thomas Bossius, "Med framtiden i backspegeln: Black metal-och transkulturen: Ungdomar, musik och religion i en senmodern värld" (diss., Gothenburg, 2003).

[68] Michael Moynihan and Didrik Søderlind, *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground* (Los Angeles: Feral House, 1998). Ika Johannesson and Jon Jefferson Klingberg, *Blod eld död: En svensk metalhistoria* (Stockholm: Alfabeta, 2011). Håvard Rem, *Infødte skrik: Norsk svartmetall* (Oslo: Schibsted, 2010).

[69] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, pp. 175, 205, 255; Carl Raschke, *Painted Black: From Drug Killings to Heavy Metal Music: The Alarming True Story of How Satanism Is Terrorizing Our Communities* (San Francisco: Harper, 1990) p. 21. Erik Rodenborg, *Lagen och dess profet: Aleister Crowley, thelema och satanismen* (Stockholm: Univ., Religionshistoriska inst., 1998) pp. 52, 55, 58–61.

[70] Granholm, "The Left-Hand Path and Post-Satanism," p. 213.

[71] Granholm, "The Left-Hand Path and Post-Satanism."

[72] Granholm, "The Left-Hand Path and Post-Satanism," p. 213.

[73] Even the third criterium proposed by Granholm, antinomianism, could potentially be found in groups completely unrelated to the phenomena under scrutiny here.

[74] To some degree, Granholm's insistence on following emic (insider) categories, and his concern with the impact on the public image of groups he studies, are likely a product of him primarily being a specialist in contemporary religion and fieldwork, who has done only limited work on historical material. Thus, he is also less interested in following lines of inquiry like the long-term revaluation of mythological figures over centuries that other scholars, who advocate using the term Satanism, have been more preoccupied with. Granholm further appears to have a general reluctance to view *anything* as an example of Satanism, even a phenomenon where this is so clearly central as the early 1990s Nordic Black Metal milieu. Kennet Granholm, " 'Sons of Northern Darkness': Heathen Influences in Black Metal and Neo-folk Music," *Numen* 58:4 (2011) pp. 514–544. For a critique see Faxneld,"*Kom, ondska, bliv mitt goda*: Black Metal-nyreligiositet och motdiskursens ordning."

[75] Cf. Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism*, pp. 1–28.

[76] Cf. Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar*, p. xiv. The term Satan is here interchangeable with the Devil, Lucifer and other names commonly used to designate the principle of evil in a Christian context (a figure that most Satanists, however, perceive quite differently—as more or less benevolent or helpful).

[77] It is difficult to estimate the number of self-identified Satanists worldwide, as statistical data is scant. A 2001 UK national census indicated around 1,600 Satanists, while a 2006 Australian census gave a number of 2,247 individuals. Extrapolating from this, Chris Mathews suggests a total of 30,000–100,000 Satanists worldwide, which appears quite reasonable (cf. Evans for cautionary remarks). Mathews, Chris, *Modern Satanism: Anatomy of a Radical Subculture* (London: Praeger, 2009) p. 160. Evans, *Paradise Lost*. However, some of these statistics are up to twenty years old, and the number may have increased quite drastically due to the popularity of The Satanic Temple during the past few years.

2

Eliphas Lévi, *La Bible de la liberté* (1841)

Julian Strube

Eliphas Lévi (1810–1875) ranks among the most influential esotericists up to the present day and could be regarded as one of the most influential esotericists of the nineteenth century. His most famous writings, *Dogme et rituel de la haute magie* (Dogma and Ritual of High Magic, 1854–1856), *Histoire de la magie* (The History of Magic, 1860), and *La clef des grands mystères* (The Key of the Great Mysteries, 1861), are considered to be the founding works of occultism and were evidently responsible for the dissemination of the terms *occultisme* (occultism) and, to another extent, *ésotérisme* (esotericism) into French and subsequently into other languages.[1] They exerted a decisive influence on Helena Blavatsky, who referred to them when defining the term "occultist" in her famous *Isis Unveiled* (1877).[2] Aleister Crowley considered himself a reincarnation of the French mage and extensively referred to his writings.[3] Lévi's theory and history of magic, his interpretation of the Kabbalah and the Tarot, as well as his emblematic drawings like the "Baphomet," remain highly influential.[4]

It is commonly understood that Lévi was the continuator or renovator of an older occult or esoteric tradition. According to a narrative that has been developed by French occultists in the late nineteenth century, Lévi was "initiated" into occultism by the extravagant Polish scholar Józef Maria Hoëné-Wroński (1776–1853). This idea was adopted by the occultist publisher and bookseller Paul Chacornac (1884–1964) in his seminal biography, published in 1926. Chacornac was well aware of the socialist past of Eliphas Lévi, who, under his civil name Alphonse-Louis Constant, had published a wealth of radical texts between 1841 and 1848. However, Chacornac maintained that a profound rupture had taken place between the socialist Constant and the occultist Lévi after an alleged initiation. Despite its

thoroughly hagiographical character, Chacornac's study exerts a major influence on scholarship.[5] Only a few studies mention a continuity of the socialist ideas of Constant well into his occultist writings, however without attempting to contextualize the respective influences.[6] Although the "Abbé Constant" was a well-known radical in the 1840s, scholarship on socialism has paid little attention to his writings.[7] In general, the scholarship on pre-1848 French socialism is relatively scarce and usually neglects the paramount importance of religious ideas in socialist currents like Saint-Simonianism and Fourierism—currents that formed the ideological background of the writings of the Abbé Constant.[8] Due to the eclipse of pre-1848 French socialism, several scholars have assumed that Eliphas Lévi, writing as an occultist, had rejected his earlier socialist ideas and turned to "imperialistic," "Catholic," and "reactionary" ideas, thus laying the foundations for an "occultism on the right."[9] However, it was exactly the "authoritarian" ideas that had been characteristic of the religious socialisms of the July Monarchy, the period between 1830 and 1848 that was marked by a liberal government and a growing socialist opposition that escalated in the February Revolution of 1848.[10]

Contemporary observers regarded the Abbé Constant as the most fervent follower of Félicité Lamennais (1782–1854),[11] the former leader of the so-called Neo-Catholic movement who had turned to a radical Christian socialism in 1834.[12] Although Lamennais undoubtedly exerted a chief influence on the Abbé Constant, who referred to his own thought as *communisme néo-catholique* (Neo-Catholic communism),[13] scholarship on esotericism has paid no attention to this relationship. It is well known that Arthur Edward Waite had been bewildered by the Catholic identity prominently articulated by Lévi in his occultist writings, as were other observers like Carl Kiesewetter.[14] Recent attempts to establish Lévi's Catholicism as an essential part of his occultism have taken no notice of his Neo-Catholic background and the historical contexts related to it.[15]

This cannot be said of the third central context of emergence of Constant's writings: Romanticism. Literary studies have paid comparatively much attention to Constant as a representative of the so-called *petits romantiques* (minor romantics), lesser-known artists who nonetheless played a notable role in the literary world of the July Monarchy.[16] This romantic background is essential to an understanding of the emergence of Constant's writings and

the development of his occultist ideas. It is important to note that this romantic context has been of political nature. In fact, the far-reaching exchanges between socialism and Romanticism in the 1830s and 1840s led numerous scholars to employ the term “Romantic Socialism” to denote the pre-1848 socialist currents in France.[17] Constant can be seen as one of the most impressive examples of young artists who were indebted to the radical religious ideas that were prevalent among reformists in the 1840s.

It can be argued that the occultism of Eliphas Lévi was, predominantly, based on his earlier socialist and Neo-Catholic ideas.[18] For that reason, the present source texts have been selected from Constant’s openly radical publications from the 1840s wherein the figure of Lucifer is discussed in a decidedly political way: *La Bible de la liberté* (The Bible of Liberty) from 1841, and *Le testament de la liberté* (The Testament of Liberty) from 1848. It will be shown that Constant’s Romantic Socialist depiction of Lucifer as rebellious, revolutionary force of liberty and reason underlies his most famous occultist writings, and that it eventually resurfaced in an openly revolutionary way in his writings since the early 1860s.

La Bible de la liberté (1841)

Origin

The *Bible de la liberté* was the first socialist writing of Alphonse-Louis Constant and one of the most radical publications of the July Monarchy. Published on February 13, 1841, it was seized hours after it had left the press. As many copies could be saved, it was one of the most frequently discovered prohibited writings at police raids.[19] Constant was incarcerated in April and brought to trial on May 11. The jury condemned him to eight months of prison and a severe fine of 300 Francs. This is no surprise considering the *Bible*’s violent content, and an extravagant mixture of radical communism, Neo-Catholicism, and romantic motifs that bestowed sudden international fame on its author.

The district attorney Jean-Isidore Partarrieu-Lafosse considered it the work of a disciple of Lamennais, bursting with hatred of society and the clergy in particular.[20] This influence becomes especially obvious in the writing’s biblical, apocalyptical style that was modelled after Lamennais’ extremely

famous *Paroles d'un croyant* (Words of a Believer, 1834) and his subsequent writings, notably *Le livre du peuple* (The Book of the People, 1838). In a very similar way, Constant described "the people" as the new Christ whose martyrdom would lead humanity to its final emancipation. The philosophical basis of Constant's writing was indebted to the Neo-Catholic "progressive traditionalism" that understood history as the gradual fulfillment of God's providence, revolving around the eternally and exclusively true tradition of Catholicism. This idea had first been articulated by the "father" of Catholic traditionalism, Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821), before it was further developed by younger Catholic thinkers like Pierre-Simon Ballanche (1776–1847) and Lamennais.

Although it might seem counterintuitive from today's perspective, Constant was but one of many socialists who enthusiastically absorbed those Catholic ideas. Next to the traditionalist notion of divine progress, the idea of a future "synthesis" of religion, science, and philosophy was only one of several overlaps between socialist and (Neo-)Catholic discourses that are of major importance in Constant's writings. From an early point, Constant articulated his wish for a final reconciliation of faith and reason, leading to a harmonious social state where the political and religious orders would become identical: the so-called *association universelle* (universal association) that had first been propagated by the Saint-Simonians who expressly modelled their ideal social order after the Catholic "hierarchy" and "spiritual authority" of de Maistre's *Du Pape* (On the Pope, 1819). Beginning with his *Bible*, Constant discussed those notions extensively, especially in regard to "tradition" and "synthesis." Remarkably, it was the figure of Lucifer that played a central role in those writings, as a symbol of the force of progress, liberty, science, and reason.

After a troublesome development that eventually led to Constant's affiliation with the Fourierist *école sociétaire* (Societarian School), he distinguished himself as one of the most notorious *Montagnards* (men of the mountain, due to their seats on the upper ranks of the National Assembly), a term (with its origins in the revolution of 1789) applied to the extreme Left, in the aftermath of the February Revolution of 1848, which had overthrown the liberal July Monarchy and installed the socialist-democratic Second Republic. Between March and May, Constant founded several journals and a *Club de la Montagne* (Mountain Club) that was described by several contemporaries as one of the most extremist groups.[21] Constant and his

comrades spoke of themselves as the propagators of “the most radical socialism” and appeared as “the apostles of the Sans-culotte Jesus” who announced the advent of the final great Revolution, the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection of the *peuple-Christ* (the people as Christ), and the doom of the bourgeoisie.

It was in that atmosphere that Constant created his *Testament de la liberté*. Written in the wake of the February Revolution, it was published shortly after the establishment of the Second Republic.[22] With probability bordering on certainty, it can be said that it was completed before the June Uprising, as this important event is not mentioned in the text. The disastrous June Days led to the demise of the French socialist currents that were predominant under the July Monarchy and shattered the worldview of many socialists, including Constant’s.[23] Implying that it had been written as a reaction to the failure of the February Revolution, the *Testament* has been interpreted by Chacornac and later scholars as the end of Constant’s socialist activities. However, it was obviously written in a period when Constant and his comrades were still blazing with revolutionary zeal. It is no wonder, then, that the *Testament* was a thoroughly revolutionary writing that announces the coming of the Kingdom of God on Earth and the fulfilment of a glorious revolutionary tradition that began with the rebellion of Lucifer.

Content

In his *Bible de la liberté*, Constant combined socialist, Neo-Catholic, and romantic ideas into a remarkable theory of redemption. The key aspect of the progressive “regeneration” of humanity as it was discussed in the writings of de Maistre and Ballanche revolved around the idea of redemption through suffering and sacrifice.[24] Constant developed this notion into a highly political concept that propagated a gradual process of regeneration achieved by the suffering of three redeemers: Jesus Christ, the great revolutionary who died a martyr on the cross; *la femme*, who lives through martyrdom as the “slave” of a corrupt society and awaits her liberation; and Lucifer, the first rebel whose martyrdom resulted from his expulsion from Heaven and who would finally be liberated by “regenerated” woman.

While the notions of Jesus Christ and the “regeneration” of woman were anything but unusual in socialist discourses,[25] their joint appearance with Lucifer was quite extraordinary. However, the motif of Lucifer or Satan as a

revolutionary rebel had been widespread in the romantic circles of the 1830s and 1840s.[26] In the works of Balzac, Hugo, Lamartine, Michelet, Vigny, Soumet, or George Sand, this idea was often endowed with political or even socialist connotations. Victor Hugo's never-accomplished *Légende des siècles* (1855–1876) and its promulgation of "La fin de Satan" can be seen as the most monumental expression of that literary genre.[27] Evidently, Constant had been profoundly influenced by some of these works. Throughout his life, he enthusiastically referred to the writings of Balzac, Hugo, and Lamartine. In his formative phase in the 1830s, he was especially influenced by the writings of George Sand (1804–1876), who had discussed the disappearance of evil, the end of Satan, as well as the establishment of a moral and social equality.[28] Constant was also familiar with Alexandre Soumet (1786–1845) with whom he had worked together on a publication in 1839, *Les belles femmes de Paris*. In his *Divine epopée* (1841), Soumet described the redemption of Satan and interpreted his suffering as a Promethean act.[29] Other collaborators and acquaintances of Constant's from the circle of the *petits romantiques*, notably Théophile Gautier (1811–1872) and Gérard de Nerval (1808–1855), articulated similar ideas.[30]

Constant developed his notion of Lucifer in several of his writings from the 1840s. One of the most remarkably passages is to be found in *La mère de Dieu* (1844): an extraordinary description of the Final Judgement and the "regeneration" of Lucifer by *la femme*, who had in turn been regenerated by the Second Coming of Christ.[31] This process was not only an allegory of the regeneration of humankind and the establishment of the socialist Kingdom of God on Earth,[32] but also for the final synthesis of reason and love (implying faith), symbolized by the figures of Lucifer and woman. This reconciliation of religion and science, reason and faith, as well as the religious and political orders dissolving into an *association universelle*, is the underlying narrative of Constant's socialist, and arguably also his occultist, publications.[33] One of the most remarkable characteristics of Constant's interpretation of the *association universelle* is the notion of androgyny, that is, the ultimate equality not only of the classes, but also of the sexes, that would dissolve into a pantheistic unity with their creator.[34]

The *Testament de la liberté* contains the most extensive and radical discussion of the revolutionary Lucifer. Constant emphasized the role of Lucifer as a redeemer of humankind who first must work for his own

redemption through suffering.[35] He depicted the Fallen Angel as the originator of a revolutionary tradition that was first picked up by Moses, who, as "the first of the great humanitarian rebels," set off the "unstoppable march of the proletarians."[36] The most prominent heirs of that tradition were Jesus Christ, and most recently Charles Fourier.[37] It has already been indicated that the *Testament* has been misunderstood as the end to Constant's reformist ambitions. But while the title might indeed suggest that Constant intended to write down a funeral eulogy, the whole point of the *Testament* is the announcement of the *resurrection* of the *peuple-Martyr* who, according to Constant, had been suffering in the "hell of the proletariat" and would soon be regenerated in order to rise to its final glory.[38]

Constant's socialist ambitions did not end with the *Testament*. As a matter of fact, they continued well into his very last writing in 1875. However, like many socialists, Constant had lost his faith in the ability of the people to emancipate itself after he had witnessed the massacres of the June Uprising. In the 1840s, he had repeatedly expressed his worries that the people might not be ready for its final liberation yet. In the *Testament*, he suggested that the people could be in need of an élite of "initiators" that should instruct the masses and guide them to emancipation.[39] After the disastrous outcome of June 1848, he became convinced that the "masses" were not ready yet. But instead of abolishing his socialist ideas, he modified them and strived for the establishment of a "true" socialism in opposition to what he regarded as "anarchistic," "materialistic," and "atheistic" forms of degenerated socialism, notably as represented by the anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865). In the process, Constant came to reject his older notion of a revolution by the people and focused on his elitist concept. This reconfiguration also affected his allegory of Lucifer.

There is no question that the figure of Lucifer plays a minor role in *Dogme et rituel* as well as in the *Histoire de la magie*, giving way to extensive discussions of the figure of Satan.[40] But this development was not due to a radical change of Constant's attitude. Rather it should be seen as a result of the political circumstances as well as a reaction to ongoing discourses about the arrival of Spiritualism to France in the 1850s. As for the last point, Constant's discussions of Satan were embedded in his polemics against contemporary Catholic writers, especially Jules-Eudes de Mirville (1802–1873) and Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux (1805–1876), who discussed the

machinations of Satan in the context of Spiritualism.[41] Already in the 1840s, Constant had argued that Satan, as a personal and active force, did not exist. He extensively elaborated this point in *Dogme et rituel* and in the *Histoire*, where he denounced the belief in Satan as "superstition" and rejected the interpretation of phenomena like table-turning as the work of demons or Satan himself.[42] According to Constant, what the "profane" were calling "Satan" was nothing but a natural agent that was used in a negative way by perverted and malignant minds. This was, in his view, also a perfectly "natural" explanation of the workings of black magic.[43]

It is in this context that Constant discussed his famous figure of "Baphomet," a symbol for the universal equilibrium of the opposites.[44] Although his Baphomet, and especially the accompanying drawing, were later used in Satanic contexts, in both self-referential and polemical ways, Constant's intention cannot be qualified as "Satanist."[45] As has been indicated, he denied the existence of Satan and saw himself as a perfectly devout Catholic. However, his depiction of the worship of Baphomet gains some ambiguity because it stands for the same heretical tradition that was, according to him, the carrier of the lost wisdom of occultism (and, in turn, identical with "true" Catholicism and "true" socialism). If one looks closely enough, though, it becomes quite clear that Constant condemned what he (ahistorically) considered the interpretations of Baphomet by individuals such as the Templars or the participants of Witches' Sabbaths, who had supposedly misunderstood the true meaning of that symbol and often adhered to what Constant called the "faux Lucifer."[46]

As for the political circumstances, it has been argued that, due to Constant's change in political attitude, the revolutionary Lucifer of the 1840s had been replaced with an image of Satan as a "stationary force" expressing hierarchy and authority.[47] However, this interpretation firstly does not take into account the fundamental role of hierarchy and authority that already underlay the "neo-Catholic communism" of the Abbé Constant; secondly it looks at *Dogme et rituel* and the *Histoire* without seeing those writings in their historical context; and it thirdly does not compare those publications with Constant's later writings.

After a coup by Louis-Napoléon in 1851, which put an end to the Second Republic and the beginning of the Second Empire, the publication of revolutionary and socialist thoughts was strictly forbidden. Like many other

socialists, Constant was at first enthusiastic about the reign of Louis-Napoléon, who presented himself as the "people's emperor" fulfilling the goals of the revolution in a peaceful and orderly way. However, Constant's enthusiasm soon faded and changed into open hostility when he published a polemical chanson directed against the emperor in 1855, which led to his third imprisonment for political reasons. Having called Louis-Napoléon the new Caligula and threatened him with the dagger of Cassius Chaerea (the man who assassinated Caligula), Constant recalled his poem and wrote an "Anti-Caligula" that allegedly moved the emperor to pardon him.[48] At that point he can hardly be seen as a follower of Louis-Napoléon. But even more importantly, Constant published his first articles about the Kabbalah in the same year in the *Revue philosophique et religieuse* (Philosophical and Religious Review), the spearhead journal of former Saint-Simonians who tried to revive socialist ideas guised as "philosophical and religious" discussions.

It could hardly become more obvious that Constant remained politically active, but that he most likely had no motivation to go public about it after his imprisonment. For that reason especially, the traces of socialist thought in *Dogme et rituel* and the *Histoire* are scarce and subtle—and it is no wonder that an openly revolutionary figure like Lucifer was practically absent. However, Constant's language changed drastically after Louis-Napoléon declared a general amnesty on August 15, 1859, and the discussion of reformist ideas became less problematic. While this had no results for the *Histoire*, whose preface is dated September 1, 1859, it had far-reaching consequences for *La clef des grands mystères* ("The Key of the Great Mysteries"), written in 1860 and published in 1861. Not only does the *Clef* contain numerous quotes from the *Bible de la liberté*,[49] but it features a spectacular return of the revolutionary Lucifer who is enthusiastically hailed as the angel of light and liberty, and the father of intelligence.[50] The *Clef* puts a heavy emphasis on the "creation of the self" that aimed at the revolution on an individual level, rather than at the swift revolutionary overthrow of society as a whole. This, however, was still articulated in highly political ways, always hinting at the creation of the future élite of initiates. In his later writings, most of them published posthumously, Constant even adapted the language of "socialism" and openly described occultism as being the doctrine of those who would lead the people to emancipation.[51]

It becomes clear that Lucifer, since 1841, symbolized the revolutionary

spirit of liberty, science, and reason. Constant never abandoned this theme, but he changed it in several respects according to his political development. While Lucifer was, in the writings of the 1840s, the liberator of the *peuple-Martyr* who would overthrow a corrupt society and realize the Kingdom of God, the Lucifer of Constant's post-1848 writings had become an individualist. He symbolized Constant's famous occultist paradigm of "se créer soi-même," (to create oneself) the first step to create an "avant-garde" that would lead the ignorant masses and eventually all humankind to regeneration.

Genre and Audience

The *Bible* and the *Testament de la liberté* were political pamphlets. It is clear that Constant wanted to propagate his radical ideas to as many readers as possible. At least with his *Bible*, he evidently succeeded in that task. It might be remarked that his occultist writings followed a similar strategy: as he wrote repeatedly, his goal was to lay down the tools to open the path to the "truth" for everybody who would be able to pick them up and understand them. For that reason, Constant's writings were never supposed to be restricted to a limited audience, but to as many "worthy" readers as possible.

Reception and Influence

It is important to note that Constant's socialist writings from the 1840 were only rediscovered at the end of the nineteenth century and probably did not reach a wider readership before the twentieth century. Clearly his discussions of Satan as a non-personal natural agent that can be found in *Dogme et rituel* and the *Histoire* received much more attention. However, the "return" of Lucifer in the *Clef* as well as the posthumous editions makes it likely that later readers became increasingly interested in Constant's understanding of Lucifer. As it has been indicated above, this understanding had been influenced by widespread romantic ideas, which makes it difficult to tell if later "Luciferians" were directly inspired by Constant's writings. However, it would be a very promising research project to look into respective influences that, given the iconic character of Constant's discussion of Lucifer, seem to be very likely. Regardless, it would be difficult to understand Constant's notions of Lucifer and Satan without taking into account the political background against which he developed them.

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Excerpt from Eliphas Lévi, *La Bible de la liberté* (1841)

Translation from French: Julian Strube.

VI. Lucifer

The angel of liberty[52] was born before the dawn, and God has called him the *morning star*.[53]

Glory to you, o Lucifer, for as you were the most sublime of intelligences, you could consider yourself equal to God!

And you have fallen like the lightning from the sky where the sun has saturated you with his clarity, in order to furrow the obscure and majestic night sky with your own rays.

You shine while the sun lays down to sleep, and your flamboyant glance precedes the dawn.

And when the day will have defeated the shadows, you will not expire, solitary star; but you will rise to the bosom of the sun whose rays will never pale your splendor again. You will return victorious and you will be around God like a diadem of glory; you will shine on his heart like a diamond.

The Father has armed you with his lightning; the Son has given you a scepter mounted by a cross; and the Spirit, in the shape of a young virgin with a gentle smile, will place on your still healing forehead the first kiss of her love!

And you will be like the triumphant warrior who returns to the hearth of his father.

And you will call yourself the light of the world, beautiful angel of liberty!

No, you are not the spirit of evil, generous spirit of revolt and of noble pride! Evil, that is nothingness, that is the privation of good; and good, that is liberty!

For liberty is the daughter of intelligence and the mother of love.

May all joys of the slaves perish! they can only prolong their disgrace! but glory will prevail in exile, in the eternal tears of the outcast.

He has fought against God, and he has defeated him; because it means to be victorious just to have fought against him.

God cannot be defeated but by his equal, and his equal is himself. O Lucifer! you came out of the bosom of God, and God has called you back.

You are the breath of his mouth and the aspiration of his heart.

You have not listened because you have understood; and you have not obeyed because you have loved.

Glory to you, spirit of intelligence and of love! because you have endured the torment of hell like Christ has suffered the torment of the cross! the world has cursed you like it has cursed him, and like him you have been counted among the ranks of the dead; but now you resuscitate, immortal redeemer of the angels!

And Christ who is still crowned with thorns—in Heaven where has reigned—will receive from your hands a crown of gold.

For gold has been purified by the flames, and the flames are eternal like the hearth of love that illuminates them.

The spirit of love is a furnace which burns and consummates hatred; it is a pool of fire that is always immobile and always active.

And hell and death have been cast into this pool of fire, and henceforth they will be no more.

Excerpts from Eliphas Lévi, *Le testament de la liberté* (1848)

I

THE GENESIS OF LIGHT

The truth that knows itself is the living thought. The truth is the thought that is in itself; and the expressed thought, that is language. When the eternal thought searched a form, it said: “Let there be light.”[54]

Now, this thought which speaks, this is the Word; and the Word said: “Let there be light, because the Word itself is the light of the spirits.”

The non-created light, which is the divine Word, shines because it wants to be seen; and when it says: “Let there be light!” it commands the eyes to open; it creates intelligences.

And when God said: “Let there be light!” the Intelligence was created and the light appeared.

Now, the Intelligence that God has put forth by a breath of his mouth, like a star detached from the sun, took the form of a splendid angel and the sky saluted him with the name of Lucifer.

Intelligence awoke and understood itself entirely by hearing these words of

the divine Word: “Let there be light!”

It felt free, because God commanded it to be so; and it answered, lifting his head and spreading its wings:

— I will not be servitude!
— Will you be suffering then? spoke the un-created voice.
— I will be Liberty! answered the light.
— Pride will seduce you, continued the supreme voice; and you will give birth to death.
— I need to fight against death in order to conquer life, said the created light.

Thus God detached from his bosom the son of splendor who retained the superb angel, and, watching him embark into the night which he traversed with glory, he loved the infant of his thought, and, smiling with an ineffable smile, he said to himself: “Let the light be beautiful.”

God has not created suffering; it is Intelligence who accepted it in order to be free.

And suffering had been the condition for being free, imposed by the one who, solely, cannot err, because he is infinite.

For the essence of Intelligence is judgement; and the essence of judgement is liberty.

The eye only really possesses the light by the faculty of shutting and opening itself.

If it were forced to be always open, it would be the slave and the victim of the light; and, in order to shun this torment, it stopped to see.

Thus, the created Intelligence is only happy to affirm God because of its liberty to deny God.

Now, the Intelligence that denies always affirms something, since it affirms its liberty.

This is why blasphemy glorifies God; and this is why hell was necessary for the joy of Heaven.

If the light had not been repelled by the shadow, there would be no visible forms.

If the first of the angels had not faced the depths of night, the childbirth of God had not been complete and the created light could not have separated itself from the light by essence.

Intelligence could have never known how God is good if it had never forgotten him!

The infinite love of God would never have burst into the joys of its mercy if the prodigal child of Heaven had remained in the house of its father.

When everything was light, light was nothing; it filled the bosom of God who was in the process of giving birth to it.

And when he said: “Let there be light!” he permitted to the night to repel the light, and the universe emerged from chaos.

The negation of the angel who, by being born, refused to be slave, constituted the equilibrium of the world, and the movement of the spheres began.

And the infinite spaces admired that love of liberty, immense enough to fill the void of the eternal night, and strong enough to bear the hatred of God.

But God could not hate the noblest of his children, and he only tested it with his anger in order to confirm its power.

And the Word of God itself, as if it was jealous of Lucifer, also wanted to descend from Heaven and traverse the shadows of hell in triumph.

It wanted to be outcast and condemned; and it contemplated in advance the terrible hour when it cried, at the extremes of its torment: “My God! my God! why have you forsaken me?”

Like the morning star precedes the sun, the Insurrection of Lucifer announced to the nascent nature the next incarnation of God.

Maybe Lucifer, by falling into the night, brought about a rain of suns and stars by the attraction of his glory!

Maybe our sun is a demon among the stars, like Lucifer is a star among the angels.

This is why, without doubt, he rests calm and illuminates the horrible fears of humanity and the slow agony of the earth, because he is free in his solitude and possesses his light.

But maybe a moment will come when the ennui cools down his rays, and then he will return towards the eternal hearth.

Salute to you, exiled sun, you who devours your heart and who smiles!

Salute to you, who spreads over the earth a robe of flowers in order to hide the bones with which it is covered!

Salute to the angel of genius; salute to the star of light, less splendidly beautiful than a sad thought of Lucifer.

Together you will return to God, when you will have wanted it, and your clarity, which you have conserved in the torments of the night and in the cold of the deserted space, will never be taken from you, because it is your conquest and will ever be yours.

Eternal salute to you, holy Liberty, unique daughter of God! to you who

emancipates the angels and who liberates the suns!

II

THE DAUGHTERS OF LUCIFER

When the light freed itself by taking conscience of itself, it felt that it must become mother, because it had been created in the image of God.

The first suffering of Intelligence were the sufferings of childbirth, and, in the solitude of its exile, it gave birth to two sisters: Poetry and Liberty.

These two daughters of the morning star emerged pure and brilliant like their mother, and both set forth, in the process of being born, to combat the night, by preceding the sun whom they seemed to flee, but for which they paved the way.

Liberty, the daughter of Intelligence, emerged from the forehead of Lucifer; and Poetry, the daughter of Contemplation, escaped from her heart with her first sobs, and descended to earth with her tears.

For the first childbirths of Lucifer were painful, because they were alone and because love did not soften the labor.

The angel of genius refused Servitude as his bride, because he aspired to the free embrace of eternal beauty.

And the daughters of his celibacy were sad in the beginning, and carried on their forehead, like their father, the sign of the damned.

One untamable and ferocious like a young lioness, the other melancholic and full of tears, both awaited the one who had to subdue all pride and lift up all hope.

It is necessary that a celestial lover descend from the sky to these two banned virgins and let them become mothers by sanctifying them with a divine kiss.

Awaiting this hour of their deliverance, Lucifer, who regarded them as too beautiful to let them openly languish in a long and painful widowhood, and who was jealous of their indestructible forms, took back their beauty which he had created, and, by folding it away like a precious vestment, hid it again in his thought and in his heart.

And he attached the soul of his two daughters to two stars; and he hid one of those stars, next to Hope, on the bottom of the box that Pandora would open; because he foresaw that the tempests of Heaven and of earth would gather to extinguish it.

As for the other, who shone brighter than the stormy nights, he let her fly about like a meteor; but she would never want to abandon his captive heart; and, fixed above the ark which had served as a cradle and refuge to the infant Liberty, the young Poetry spread her light over it and will always serve as a guide to those who carry it towards the future, this holy depot sent by the angel of intelligence.

For Lucifer, in his suffering and solitude, cannot raise his daughters himself.

Genius will be the father when he will have found harmony, and Intelligence will be the mother when she will unite with love.

Then Liberty will come out of her ark with the traits of a young queen, and Poetry, transfigured, will hold out her arms to her heart. Both will then circle the world and submit it with the magic of their beauty, and with the irresistible seduction of their voice.

Then Liberty will become sweet and harmonious like Poetry, and Poetry, almighty, will be queen like Liberty.

The spirit of love will borrow their traits to submit and save the rebel angel; and he will come to love and fertilize the two noble sisters, with the glorious traits of the regenerated génie.

This is how glory will return to the calm family of the children of God, and the softened lions will sleep among the lambs.

May the lion still roar in the desert, and may the lamb still bleat among the flowers!

God, who is their father, hears them and understands their plaint; he wants to reconcile and bless them.

But he will never force the lion to bleat like the lamb; he will only deify the lamb and make it respected by the lions.

In the mystical heaven that opened up to the ecstasy of Saint John, a lion roared, an eagle cried, a bull lowed, and an angle spoke: but none of them could explain the mysteries of the closed book.

It was the lamb, still bloodied by the rigors of sacrifice, who made the heaven and the earth understand the secrets of the eternal book, and who appeared before the throne, triumphant and calm in the midst of seven thunders, of seven trumpets, and of seven plagues.

Royalty on her white horse, War on her red horse, Famine on her black horse, and Death on her pale horse can now plough the world, the hope of the chosen ones of the future is immortal, the lamb that has been butchered lives,

and it is he who knows the secrets of the book of God.

He knows them, and he rests, because he waits!

III

THE ARK OF THE STAR

Liberty has enemies in heaven, on earth, and in hell.

God has fought her at first to endow her with glory that almost equals his own, by letting her be victorious over himself.

God who must love her even when he exiled her from his divinity and who carried out the task of malediction in order to win the love of the damned; God who has consented to the fears of nature and to the blasphemies of the spirits to give birth to the most beautiful of his daughters; God who has tormented her without pity, knowing well that the torments made her grow and that the suffering made her strong; God, who took glory from the battles of his creature and who triumphed in the victories that she wrenched from him, let the whole of creation rise against her, so she could submit creation and would consequently have the right to liberate it.

For if Intelligence is born the queen of the world, it is to Liberty that she owes all her power, and if God has placed her as a judge between the heaven and the earth, it is Liberty alone who must be mediator between Intelligence and God.

On earth, the enemies of Liberty are those who aspire to her and to whom she has refused her love, because they were not yet worthy of loving her.

The enemies of Liberty on earth are the elements, which fear her because they are still the slaves of the blind forces; forces that she must direct and submit; they see in her an even more powerful sovereign, and they revolt against her in advance because they do not know her.

In hell, the enemies of Liberty are ignorance, the night, and the stupid pride that hides therein; hate, envy and all the vices that beget despotism and nourish fury.

Thus, when Lucifer wanted to construct an ark to hide the star of Liberty, he did not want to make it of gold or silver, because gold and silver tempt the greed of the kings and quickly become instruments of servitude in their hands.

First of all, he did not want to make it of iron, because chains are forged of iron, and because rust settles on it and ends up devouring it.

He furthermore wanted it to float on the abysses of water, but he could not craft it out of wood because he was afraid that it could not resist the attacks of fire.

When he thus saw that neither the metals, nor wood, nor the other substances of nature could serve the safety of young Liberty, Lucifer decided to make a new gold that was inaccessible to the greed of the kings, an immaculate silver that could never serve corruption, and a divinely tempered iron that was a rebel to the hammer of tyranny, and that could never be rusted by blood or tears.

He took the light of its diadem and condensed it into gold, and he changed the crepuscular rays of his aureole into silver, he surprised the sleeping archangel Michael and seized his sword from which he took and bent the iron; then, after plucking a fruit from the tree of wisdom, he replanted his seed and made grow from the earth a sacred stem of wood that must save the world, and which the flame of hell could never destroy.

So he made the interior of the ark with the wood of the tree that later became a cross, then he melted, with the fire of his breath, the gold of his diadem, the silver of is aureole, and the iron of the sword of the archangel, and he took it to cover the exterior of the sacred cradle.

In that ark he put the star of Liberty, then he locked it with care and hid it in a cavern near to the summit of Mount Sinai.

It was at that time that he carried along the first humans with his glorious revolt.

To woman he promised science; and woman faced death to free her thought.

Man found his companion who was so sublime that he dared to prefer her to God.

By giving their lives, one to intelligence, the other one to love, both deserved to pass through the ordeals of life towards the immortality of intelligence and love.

They were expelled from the paradise of innocence; but they became the laborious kings of the earth that was given them to conquer.

And Lucifer, before leaving them, revealed to them with a whisper, still mysterious and vague, the secret of the star and the ark he had hidden.

This is why Adam began to labor and to clear out the earth with courage, in order to discover the treasure that was buried therein.

Cain, the most ambitious of the children of Adam, killed his brother Abel

to be the sole heir of the star, and set off to search the whole world for it; but he could not find it, because a cloud of blood was always in front of his eyes.

Nimrod, one of the descendants of Cain, wanted to conquer the world in order to become the master of the star; because the earth, beaten by its own efforts and weakened by the convulsions of the deluge, had become like a prey abandoned to the tyranny of men.

But the deluge could not swallow the ark of the stars in its waters, and the tyrants, who slaughtered each other like ravens on a devastated field covered with corpses, could never discover the cave of Mount Sinai.

It was the leader of the first free people, the scourge of the Pharaohs, the king of the vague and the conqueror of the desert who had to receive from the very hands of Gods the cradle wherein the child of the light was rested.

It was Moses the condemned who had to reveal Liberty to the world for the first time, by proclaiming the law before which all created spirits are equal.

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[1] For example Robert Amadou, *L'Occultisme. Esquisse d'un monde vivant* (Saint Jean-de-la-Ruelle: Editions Chanteloup, 1987 [1950]) p. 15. Pierre A. Riffard, *Qu'est-ce que l'ésotérisme? Anthologie de l'ésotérisme occidental* (Paris: R. Laffont, 1990) pp. 34, 85, 198. Mircea Eliade, *Occultism, Witchcraft, and Cultural Fashions. Essays in Comparative Religions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976) p. 49. Antoine Faivre, *Access to Western Esotericism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994) pp. 87f. Jean-Pierre Laurant, *L'ésotérisme chrétien en France au XIXe siècle* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1992) p. 21. Wouter Hanegraaff, "Occult/Occultism," in *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, ed. Wouter J. Hanegraaff, Antoine Faivre, Roelof van den Broek, and Jean-Pierre Brach (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2006) p. 887, and Marco Pasi, "Occultism," in *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, ed. Kocku von Stuckrad (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2006) p. 1364.

[2] Helena Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology* (New York, London: J. W. Bouton, Bernard Quaritch, 1877) p. XXXVII: "Occultist.—One who studies the various branches of occult science. The term is used by the French kabalists (See Eliphas Lévis's works)." As for the influence of Lévi on the Theosophical Society, see Helmut Zander, *Anthroposophie in Deutschland. Theosophische Weltanschauung und gesellschaftliche Praxis 1884–1945*, 2 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007) vol. 1, p. 85.

[3] Aleister Crowley, *Magick in Theory and Practice* (Mansfield Centre: Martino Publishing, 2011 [1929]) pp. 51ff.

[4] On the figure of the Baphomet and its historical context, see Julian Strube, "The 'Baphomet' of Eliphas Lévi. Its Meaning and Historical Context," *Correspondences* 4 (2017) pp. 37–79.

[5] Auguste Viatte, *Victor Hugo et les illuminés de son temps* (Genève: Slatkine, 1973 [1942]) pp. 93, 96f., Frank Paul Bowman, *Eliphas Lévi, visionnaire romantique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969) p. 8, cf. the more nuanced opinion in Alain Mercier, *Eliphas Lévi et la pensée magique au XIXe siècle Alain Mercier* (Paris: Seghers, 1974) pp. 10f. The pioneering study of Christopher McIntosh is based almost entirely on Chacornac and the writings of Arthur Edward Waite: see Christopher McIntosh, *Eliphas Lévi and the French Occult Revival*, 2nd ed. (London: Rider, 1975) p.

11. Cf. Karl R. H. Frick, *Licht und Finsternis. Gnostisch-theosophische und freimaurerisch-okkulte Geheimgesellschaften bis an die Wende zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Marix Verlag, 2005 [1975–1978]) pp. 396–401 and Harald Lamprecht, *Neue Rosenkreuzer. Ein Handbuch, Kirche, Konfession, Religion 45* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004) p. 66, as well as the hagiography by Christiane Buisset, *Eliphas Lévi. Sa vie, son œuvre, ses pensées* (Paris: Guy Trédaniel, 1984) and the very unreliable accounts in Robert Lesley Uzzel, *Eliphas Lévi and the Kabbalah: The Masonic and French Connection of the American Mystery Tradition* (Lafayette: Cornerstone Book Publishers, 2006) and Arnaud de L'Estoile, *Eliphas Lévi, Qui suis-je?* (Grez-sur-Loing: Pardès, 2008). Cf. the thorough study of Laurant, *L'ésotérisme chrétien en France au XIXe siècle*, p. 102, who portrays Lévi as an "archeologist" of an older occultism. On the construction of Lévi as "the great renovator of occultism," see Julian Strube, "Occultist Identity Formations Between Theosophy and Socialism in Fin-de-Siècle France," *Numen* 64:5–6 (2017) pp. 568–595.

[6] Léon Cellier, *L'épopée romantique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954) p. 211, James Webb, *Die Flucht vor der Vernunft. Politik, Kultur und Okkultismus im 19. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Marix Verlag, 2009 [1971]) pp. 398–414, 471, Thomas A. Williams, *Eliphas Lévi: Master of Occultism* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1975) pp. 7, 146f., Francis Lacassin in Eliphas Lévi, *Secrets de la magie* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2000) pp. VII–XIX and Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Western Esoteric Traditions: A Historical Introduction* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) pp. 192f. The most extensive accounts can be found in Jean-Marc Seijo-Lopez, "Révélation et révolution dans l'œuvre d'Alphonse-Louis Constant," *Politica Hermetica* 9 (1995) pp. 52f. and Lynn R. Wilkinson, *The Dream of an Absolute Language: Emanuel Swedenborg and French Literary Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996) pp. 21–24.

[7] Herbert J. Hunt, *Le socialisme et le romantisme en France. Étude de la presse socialiste de 1830 à 1848* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935) p. 161, Jean Maitron, *Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français* (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières, 1964) vol. 1, p. 451, Gian Mario Bravo *Les socialistes avant Marx* (Paris: Maspero, 1970) vol. 3, and Georges Sencier, *Le Babouvisme après Babeuf* (Genève: Mégaríotis, 1977 [1912]) pp. 233f. Cf. the careful analysis in Naomi Judith Andrews, "La Mère Humanité. Femininity in the Romantic Socialism of Pierre Leroux and the Abbé A.-L. Constant," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 63:4 (2002) and Naomi Judith Andrews, *Socialism's Muse: Gender in the Intellectual Landscape of French Romantic Socialism* (Lanham, MA: Lexington Books, 2006), which neglects the period after 1848. Seijo-Lopez, "Révélation et révolution dans l'œuvre d'Alphonse-Louis Constant" is a notable exception.

[8] Strube Julian, "Socialist Religion and the Emergence of Occultism: A Genealogical Approach to Socialism and Secularization in 19th-Century France," *Religion* 46:3 (2016) pp. 364–379; "Socialism and Esotericism in July Monarchy France," *History of Religions* 57:2 (2017); "Ein neues Christentum. Frühsozialismus, Neo-Katholizismus und die Einheit von Religion und Wissenschaft," *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 66:2 (2014).

[9] See Joscelyn Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994) p. 204 and Karl Baier, *Meditation und Moderne. Zur Genese eines Kernbereichs moderner Spiritualität in der Wechselwirkung zwischen Westeuropa, Nordamerika und Asien*, 2 vols. (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2009) vol. 1, p. 274. David Allen Harvey, *Beyond enlightenment Occultism and Politics in Modern France* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005) pp. 199–203 is completely unaware of the socialist context, while Lynn L. Sharp, *Secular Spirituality. Reincarnation and Spiritism in Nineteenth Century France* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006) pp. 32, 182f., suggests respective connections between Spiritism and socialism, while dealing with Constant only marginally. Cf. Webb, *Die Flucht vor der Vernunft*, 515, who, based on the pioneering works of Auguste Viatte, had hinted at a relationship between socialism and occultism. Also see the discussion in Jean-Pierre Laurant, "Esoterisme et socialisme 1830–1914," *Revue Française d'Histoire des Idées Politiques* 23 (2006) pp. 129–147.

[10] Strube, "Socialist Religion and the Emergence of Occultism," pp. 367, 378; "Socialism and Esotericism in July Monarchy France," p. 212; "Ein neues Christentum," pp. 145–162.

[11] Louis de Carné, "Publications démocrates et communists," *Revue des deux mondes* 27 (1841) p. 730, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *De la création de l'ordre dans l'humanité ou Principes d'organisation politique* (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1843) pp. 34f., Sebastian Seiler, *Das Eigentum in Gefahr! Oder was haben Deutschland und die Schweiz vom Kommunismus und Vernunftglauben zu fürchten?* (Bern: Jenni, 1843) pp. 29–43, Karl Grün, "Theologie und Sozialismus," in *Rheinische Jahrbücher zur gesellschaftlichen Reform*, ed. Hermann Püttmann (Konstanz: Verlagsbuchhandlung zu Belle-Vue, 1846) pp. 31–34, Max, *Die französische Volksliteratur seit 1833* (Leipzig: E. O. Weller, 1847) p. 37, Lorenz von Stein, *Geschichte der socialen Bewegung in Frankreich von 1789 bis auf unsere Tage*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Otto Wigand, 1850) vol. 2, p. 422, Julian Schmidt, *Geschichte der französischen Literatur seit der Revolution 1789* (Leipzig: Ludwig Herbig, 1858) vol. 1, p. 307.

[12] Jean-René Derré, *Lamennais, ses amis et le mouvement des idées à l'époque romantique 1824–1834, Bibliothèque française et romane. Études littéraires* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1962). Louis Le Guillou, *L'Evolution de la pensée religieuse de Félicité Lamennais* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1966). Jean Lebrun, *Lamennais ou l'Inquiétude de la liberté* (Paris, Tours: Fayard, Mame, 1981).

[13] Alphonse-Louis Constant, *La voix de la famine* (Paris: Ballay Aîné, 1846) p. 14.

[14] Arthur Edward Waite, *The Mysteries of Magic. A Digest of the Writings of Eliphas Lévi with Biographical and Critical Essay* (London: Redway, 1886) pp. xviii–xxi and Carl Kiesewetter, *Geschichte des neueren Occultismus. Geheimwissenschaftliche Systeme von Agrippa von Nettesheym bis zu Carl du Prel* (Wiesbaden: Marix Verlag, 2007 [1891]) pp. 423f.

[15] Wouter Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy. Rejected Knowledge in Western Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) pp. 244–248 and Bernd-Christian Otto, "A (Catholic) 'Magician' Historicizes 'Magic': Eliphas Lévi's Histoire de la Magie," in *History and Religion: Writing a Religious Past*, ed. Bernd-Christian Otto, Susanne Rau, and Jörg Rüpke (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015). Cf. Hanegraaff, "The Beginnings of Occultist Kabbalah. Adolphe Franck and Eliphas Lévi," in *Kabbalah and Modernity: Interpretations, Transformations, Adaptations*, ed. Boaz Huss, Marco Pasi, and Kocku von Stuckrad (Leiden: Brill, 2010) pp. 107–128.

[16] Bowman, *Eliphas Lévi*, pp. 5–60, cf. the study of Constant's close friend and comrade Alphonse Esquiros by Jacques P. van den Linden, *Alphonse Esquiros. De la bohème romantique à la république sociale* (Heerlen, Paris: Winants, Nizet, 1948). As for the general context of Romanticism, see Cellier, *L'épopée romantique*. Brian Juden, *Traditions orphiques et tendances mystiques dans le Romantisme français 1800–1855* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971). Paul Bénichou, *Le temps des prophètes. Doctrines de l'âge romantique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977). Frank Paul Bowman, *Le Christ des barricades* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1987) and Yves Vadé, *L'enchantement littéraire. Ecriture et magie de Chateaubriand à Rimbaud* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990). For later influences, see also John Senior, *The Way Down and Out: The Occult in Symbolist Literature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1959) pp. 74–144; Webb, *Die Flucht vor der Vernunft*, 247–297; Ellis Hanson, *Decadence and Catholicism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997) and Albert Boime, *Revelation of Modernism. Responses to Cultural Crises in Fin-de-Siècle Painting* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2008) pp. 145–201.

[17] Ernest Seillière, *Le mal romantique. Essai sur l'impérialisme irrationnel* (Paris: Plon Nourrit et Compagnie, 1908); Henri Louvancour, *De Henri de Saint-Simon à Charles Fourier. Etude sur le socialisme romantique français de 1830* (Chartres: Durand, 1913). Marguerite Thibert, *Le rôle social de l'art d'après Saint-Simon* (Paris: M. Rivière, 1926). Carel Lodewijk de Liefde, *Le Saint-Simonisme dans la poésie française entre 1825 et 1865* (Haarlem: Amicitia, 1927). Hunt, *Le socialisme et le romantisme en France*; David Owen Evans, *Le socialisme romantique. Pierre Leroux et ses contemporains, Bibliothèque d'histoire économique et sociale* (Paris: M. Rivière, 1948); David Owen Evans, *Social Romanticism in France, 1830–1848* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951); Frank Paul

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[18] This argument is fully developed in Julian Strube, *Sozialismus, Katholizismus und Okkultismus im Frankreich des 19. Jahrhunderts. Die Genealogie der Schriften von Eliphas Lévi*, vol. 69: *Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2016).

[19] Christopher H. Johnson, *Utopian Communism in France: Cabet and the Icarians, 1839–1851* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974) p. 71.

[20] Jules Thomas, *Procès de “la Bible de la liberté”* (Paris: Pilout, 1841) p. 19.

[21] Adolphe Chenu, *Les Conspirateurs. Deuxième partie tirée des mémoires d’un Montagnard* (Paris: D. Giraud et J. Dagneau, 1850) p. 105, 111; Alphonse Lucas, *Les clubs et les clubistes. Histoire complète, critique et anecdotique des clubs et des comités électoraux fondés à Paris depuis la révolution de 1848* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1851) pp. 183ff. cf. Alexandre Erdan, *La France mistique. Tableau des excentricités religieuses de ce tems*, 2 vols. (Paris: Coulon-Pineau, 1855) vol. 1, p. 289.

[22] Alphonse-Louis Constant, *Le testament de la liberté* (Paris: J. Frey, 1848) p. 117.

[23] See the vivid description in the work of one of Constant’s closest friends and comrades, Alphonse Esquiros, *De la vie future au point de vue socialiste* (Paris: Comon, 1850) pp. 57–58.

[24] Carolina Armenteros, *The French Idea of History: Joseph de Maistre and his Heirs, 1794–1854* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011) and Arthur McCalla, *A Romantic Historiosophy. The Philosophy of History of Pierre-Simon Ballanche*, *Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 1998).

[25] Bowman, *Le Christ des barricades*. Andrews, “La Mère Humanité,” and Andrews, *Socialism’s Muse*.

[26] Max Milner, *Le diable dans la littérature française, de Cozotte à Baudelaire, 1772–1861*, 2 vols. (Paris: J. Corti, 1960) vol. 1, pp. 516–622. Ursula Müller, ”Die Gestalt Lucifers in der Dichtung vom Barock bis zur Romantik” (diss., Universität Gießen, 1940) pp. 55–69. Per Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism: Lucifer as the Liberator of Woman in Nineteenth-Century Culture* (Stockholm: Molin & Sorgenfrei, 2014) pp. 113–160 and Ruben van Luijk, “Satan Rehabilitated? A Study into Satanism During the Nineteenth Century” (diss., Universiteit van Tilburg, 2013) pp. 83–173.

[27] Max Milner, *Le diable dans la littérature française, de Cozotte à Baudelaire, 1772–1861*, 2 vols. (Paris: J. Corti, 1960) vol. 2, pp. 358–422. Cellier, *L’épopée romantique*, pp. 221–245, and Müller, “Die Gestalt Lucifers in der Dichtung vom Barock bis zur Romantik,” pp. 53f., 62f.; vgl. Luijk, “Satan Rehabilitated?,” p. 92.

[28] Max Milner, *Le diable dans la littérature française, de Cozotte à Baudelaire, 1772–1861*, vol. 1, pp. 164–172. Bowman, *Le Christ des barricades*, p. 266. Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism*, pp. 137f. and Luijk, “Satan Rehabilitated?,” pp. 140ff.

[29] Milner, *Le diable dans la littérature française, de Cozotte à Baudelaire*, vol 2, pp. 117–146 and Luijk, “Satan Rehabilitated?,” 91. Constant referred to the theme of Prometheus very often throughout his life.

[30] About Gautier, see Max Milner, *Le diable dans la littérature française, de Cozotte à Baudelaire*, vol 2, pp. 173–177, cf. 522–531; Nerval, see pp. 274–309, cf. 583–594.

[31] Alphonse-Louis Constant, *La mère de Dieu. Epopée religieuse et humanitaire* (Paris: Charles Gosselin, 1844) pp. 251–267.

[32] Strube, “Das sozialistische ‘Königreich Gottes auf Erden’ als Erfüllung der Heilsgeschichte,” *Berliner Theologische Zeitschrift* 37 (2020) pp. 140–159.

[33] Cf. Flora Tristan and Alphonse Constant, *L'émancipation de la femme ou Le testament de la paria complété d'après ses notes et publié par A. Constant* (Paris: Au Bureau de la Direction de "La Vérité", 1846) pp. 36–45.

[34] Constant understood God as being both male and female, an idea that he probably took from Simon Ganneau, a radical socialist who was known as the "Mapah." The notion of androgyny was especially developed in Constant, *L'assomption de la femme ou Le livre de l'amour*, pp. 78f. and picked up in Constant, *La mère de Dieu*, pp. 300f.

[35] Constant, *Le testament de la liberté*, pp. 49ff, 207–211.

[36] Constant, *Le testament de la liberté*, pp. 18, 23.

[37] Constant, *Le testament de la liberté*, pp. 127, 146ff. Also cf. Alphonse-Louis Constant, *Le livre des larmes ou Le Christ consolateur. Essai de conciliation entre l'Église catholique et la philosophie moderne* (Paris: Paulier, 1845) pp. 241f, where other members of that tradition are named, including Saint-Simon, Swedenborg, and Lamennais.

[38] This is expressly stated in.Constant, *Le testament de la liberté*, pp. 205–212.

[39] For example, see Constant, *Le testament de la liberté*, p. 33.

[40] Cf. the discussion in Luijk, "Satan Rehabilitated?," pp. 155–167.

[41] See Strube, "The 'Baphomet' of Eliphas Lévi," pp. 69–73; cf. Laurant, *L'ésotérisme chrétien en France au XIXe siècle*, pp. 89–92; Nicole Edelman, *Voyantes, guérisseuses et visionnaires en France* (Paris: Michel, 1995) pp. 165–168; Vadé, *L'enchantement littéraire*, p. 272; Frank Paul Bowman, "Une lecture politique de la folie religieuse ou théomanie," *Romantisme* 24 (1979) pp. 85f. and John Warne Monroe, *Laboratories of Faith: Mesmerism, Spiritism, and Occultism in Modern France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008) pp. 30–36.

[42] Eliphas Lévi, *Histoire de la magie* (Paris: Baillière, 1860) pp. 290–297, 417.

[43] Eliphas Lévi, *Dogme et rituel de la haute magie*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Paris, London, New York: Germer Baillière, 1861 [1856]) vol. 1, pp. 107, 226, 288–291.

[44] See especially Lévi, *Dogme et rituel*, pp. 208–239. For a comprehensive analysis of this symbol, see Strube, "The 'Baphomet' of Eliphas Lévi."

[45] Cf. Luijk, "Satan Rehabilitated?," pp. 158f, and Bernd-Christian Otto, *Magie. Rezeptions- und diskursgeschichtliche Analysen von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit, Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten 57* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011) pp. 544f.

[46] See Eliphas Lévi, *Dogme et rituel de la haute magie*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Paris, London, New York: Germer Baillière, 1861 [1856]) vol. 2, pp. 208–239 and Lévi, *Histoire de la magie*, pp. 194–201. Cf. Strube, "The 'Baphomet' of Eliphas Lévi," pp. 39–40, 44–53.

[47] Luijk, "Satan Rehabilitated?," 166f.

[48] On June 3, 1875, the *Figaro* claimed that it had actually been Léonor-Joseph Havin, the director of the *Siècle*, who had achieved his release from prison.

[49] Several long passages from the *Testament* were included in Constant's former occultist writings, however of a much more politically harmless nature.

[50] Eliphas Lévi, *La clef des grands mystères* (Paris: Baillière, 1861) pp. 22ff., 67.

[51] See especially Eliphas Lévi, *Le livres des sages. Œuvre posthume* (Paris: Bibliothèque Chacornac, 1912) and *Le catéchisme de la paix suivi de quatrains sur la bible et de la Bible de la liberté (extraits)* (Paris: Bibliothèque Chacornac, 1902).

[52] This footnote is indicated by an asterisk in the original. *Lucifer* is supposed to mean angel of light, or otherwise of science. It is due to centuries of ignorance that he was made into the prince of demons.

[53] Paris: Le Gallois, 1841, pp. 17ff.
[54] Eliphas Lévi, Le testament de la liberté (Paris: J. Frey, 1848) pp. 1–17.

3

Jules Michelet, *La Sorciére* (1862)

Ruben van Luijk

The French historian Jules Michelet's (1798–1874) *La Sorcière* ["The Witch"] can be considered as the most prominent manifestation of Romantic Satanism in nineteenth-century history writing. Much more than just a history of witchcraft, it is also an ideological program and an anti-Christian manifesto. *La Sorcière* would prove to be highly influential and was an (indirect) source of inspiration for the concept of witchcraft in Wicca and some forms of Satanism.[1]

Michelet started out as a royalist with a romantic longing for the Middle Ages but gradually drifted into the radical and republican camp.[2] Two things would be of special importance for his development. First, his discovery of the work of Giambatrista Vico (1668–1744), and thus his awakening to a romantic way of practicing history. Second, his experience of the July Revolution of 1830, which established a more liberal and democratic constitution to France. Vico provided him with a theoretical framework to write history in a revolutionary and mythological way: the idea of "humanity creating itself" from then on informed Michelet's activities as a historian in the broadest sense of the word.[3] The July Revolution would prove a watershed in Michelet's political stance. "During those memorable days a great light appeared," he would write in retrospective, "[a]nd I perceived France."[4]

In his *Introduction à l'histoire universelle* (1831), which he claimed to have composed "on the burning pavements of Paris" during the summer of 1830, Michelet expounded a concept of the history of civilization as an ongoing process of human liberation. This new outlook also changed his perception of Christianity. In his royalist days, he had described the medieval church as the embodiment par excellence of the people, and the Christian

faith as an essential evolutionary step in humanity's development toward the ideal. Now, he began to grow more critical of the Christian religion, initially envisioning its transformation along humanist lines—and eventually, its complete removal.[5]

Michelet's growing radicalism and anticlericalism contributed to his growing estrangement from the academic establishment. When he refused to sign a declaration of loyalty to the future Emperor Napoleon III in 1851, he lost his position at the Collège de France and at the national archives. He continued to work as an independent historian, rewriting the volumes of his *Histoire de la France* into one great panegyric of Progress and Revolution, with the French people as its central character. In 1849, he married his second wife, Athénaïs Mialaret, and this would set Michelet on the track that would eventually result in *La Sorcière*. His first marriage had not been very happy, but with the much younger Athénaïs, the veteran historian at last experienced marital bliss. He became interested in nature, in human physiology (particularly of the female body), in the social position of woman, and in the physical processes of love and digestion. These new interests led to new writings, some of which were rather unusual for a sixty-year-old historian. In 1860, for example, he began a lesbian erotic novel entitled *Sylvine, mémoires d'une femme de chambre* ("Sylvine, Memoirs of a Chambermaid"), and a biography of his wife's maiden years, *Mémoires d'une jeune fille honnête* ("Memoirs of an Honest Young Girl")—both of which his young wife dissuaded him from publishing.[6] In the history of witchcraft, Michelet found a subject that allowed him to place his new discoveries in life on a historical canvas.

La Sorciére (1862)

Origin

In 1837, Michelet had still described witchcraft as the "disgusting abortion of vanquished old religions." In 1840, this was changed to the more neutral "left-over of vanquished old religions."[7] *La Sorcière* would take this process a step further and expound a completely new theory on the origins of historic witchcraft, which according to Michelet had evolved out of surviving remnants of paganism into a revolutionary and feminist cult of Satan by the

medieval oppressed. The Satan they worshipped was in reality nothing else than "the Great Serf Revolt." Michelet drew here from a discourse in nineteenth-century counterculture that had manifested itself up to then primarily in literature and esotericism. One of his most direct sources of inspiration had been the novel *Consuelo* by socialist author George Sand (1804–1876), in which the medieval Hussites had been depicted as a Satanist revolutionary sect striving for the good of mankind. Yet *La Sorcière* can be placed in a wider context of Romantic Satanism that had arisen toward the end of the eighteenth century and had embarked on a positive reappraisal of Satan as symbol of emancipation and liberation in both the political, religious, and social spheres.

La Sorcière was first published in 1862 at Paris by Dentu and Hetzel. Considerable difficulties between Michelet and his editors had preceded its publication; both the original printer and the original publisher had shied away from the book after the government of Napoleon III had intimated its intention to ban the sale of *La Sorcière*. That the French authorities were keenly aware of Michelet's agenda with his publication is made clear by a remark in an internal government report: "Depicting in some way God as evil and the Demon as the renewer of life, imputating the moral and material miseries of man and woman during the Middle Ages to one of the main sources of modern civilization, to Christianity: that is an idea that already contains its own refutation."[8] In the end, no legal measures were enforced, but the threatening attitude of the state contributed to the buzz surrounding the work. We include here an excerpt of chapter 11, which describes the Witches' Sabbath.

Content

As already mentioned, *La Sorcière* tells the history of the medieval cult of witchcraft as Michelet envisioned it. Initially, the French historian relates, the Witches' Sabbath had been nothing but a "frivolous relict of paganism [. . .] an innocent carnival of serfs" that had survived the coming of "anti-natural" Christianity.[9] Only when the misery of the serfs reached unprecedented heights and issued in the great rural rebellions of the later Middle Ages did the Sabbath, properly speaking, come into being.[10] This Sabbath functioned as a rallying point against the oppression by church and feudalism, obtaining a more and more explicitly anti-Christian character.

Women had served as initiators of this new development, Michelet argued. Taking a decidedly feminist turn, he pictured how medieval woman in her misery found solace with the genii of the house—remnants of the friendly pagan gods of yore who helped her with her chores and transmitted the knowledge of the old ways. During the upheavals of the thirteenth century, and only then, these homestead spirits finally evolved into Satan, the "great serf Revolt, *him to whom injustice has been done*, the old Outlaw."[11]

The celebrations of the Sabbath are led by a female high priest, the "fiancée of the Devil," a woman with the beauty of sorrow and a flood of serpent-like black curls, "I mean a torrent of black, untamable hair."[12] During the apogee of the Sabbath, a priapic statue is unveiled, and the black-curled priestess mounts this. An offering is made to the "Spirit of the Earth" and the "God of Liberty," with "Woman herself" serving as an altar.

Many classic themes of Romantic Satanism can be seen to reappear in *La Sorcière*. To start with, the political significance of Michelet's medieval cult of the "great serf Revolt" is hard to miss. "Under the vague shadow of Satan, the people did venerate nothing else but the people," Michelet commented.[13] His efforts here amount to little more than reading the nineteenth-century revolutionary Satan into medieval history. Also prominent in Michelet is the connection between Satan and the reappraisal of nature and sexuality, another key theme of Romantic Satanism. One of the most salient features of the medieval cult of Satan is for Michelet "the rehabilitation of the womb; [. . .] that worshipped womb thrice holy from which man eternally is born and reborn."[14] Medieval Satanism is a revolt against the "anti-nature" of Christianity. Another recurring theme is the Satanic association with science and (forbidden) knowledge. In an ingenious way, Michelet connects the folk medicine of the witch with the rise of the medical profession and the empiricism of modern science. Science has always been revolt, argues Michelet; magic, medicine, astrology, biology, "all [. . .] have been Satan."[15]

Genre and Audience

La Sorcière purports to be a work on history written for the general educated public. It features a fairly extensive bibliography, unusual for its time. Today, however, we would probably class a work like *La Sorcière* as pulp history or pseudoscience, while parts of it are written in a narrative style that is

indistinguishable from historical fiction. One modern historian has aptly characterized it as "a work of mythography."[16]

It is clear that Michelet's work was not inspired by a calm new look at the sources. Using his reconstruction of the witch cult as a springboard, the French historian constructs a deliberate counter-myth that targets the purported nefarious influence of the Christian Church in past and present and promotes a progressive agenda of liberation and emancipation. It is only after discerning this political, ideological, and spiritual agenda that one understands why *La Sorcière* can end on an odd note of eschatological triumph. In a grand vision of coming cosmic unity, Michelet envisions the final triumph of science and the reunion of Satan with God, of the "Fairy-Woman" with the "Medicine-Man," and of humanity with nature.[17] "The Anti-Natural will fade away, and the day is not far away anymore on which her fortunate eclipse will bring a new day to the world."[18]

La Sorcière, it must be noted, is also at times a hardly veiled pornographic novel. A hostile critic described Michelet's book as a deification of the flesh, "almost a provocation to debauchery." Even one of his disciples compared the work to a cantharid.[19]

Reception and Influence

Almost directly after its appearance, *La Sorcière* was banned by the French authorities, eliciting letters of support by George Sand and Victor Hugo and making the work an immediate *succès de scandale*. It was reprinted repeatedly and translated in most major European languages, including English. Despite its highly fanciful nature, Michelet's book remained an often-cited source on the history of witchcraft during the rest of the nineteenth century. Directly or indirectly, it influenced important figures in the history of Satanism as J.-K. Huysmans, Jules Bois, and Polish Decadent Stanislaw Przybyszewski (see separate chapter in the present volume), who has been dubbed as one of the first modern Satanists by scholar Per Faxneld. Michelet was also an unacknowledged source of inspiration for Charles Godfrey Leland and Margaret Murray, two authors who would be of great importance for the genesis of modern pagan witchcraft. Michelet's hint that the witch cult might have subsisted in the remoter parts of the countryside would receive an unexpected follow-up in 1954, when an English coven of "traditional" witches led by Gerald Gardner came into the open.

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Excerpt from Jules Michelet, *La Sorcière* (1862)

Translation from French: L. J. Trotter

Human brotherhood, defiance of the Christian heaven, a distorted worship of nature herself as God—such was the purport of the Black Mass.[20]

They decked an altar to the arch-rebel of serfs, to *Him who had been so wronged*, the old outlaw, unfairly hunted out of heaven, "the Spirit by whom earth was made, the Master who ordained the budding of the plants." Such were the names of honor given him by his worshippers, the *Luciferians*, and also, according to a very likely opinion, by the Knights of the Temple.

The greatest miracle of those unhappy times is, the greater abundance found at the nightly communion of the brotherhood, than was to be found elsewhere by day. By incurring some little danger the Witch levied her contributions from those who were best off, and gathered their offerings into a common fund. Charity in a Satanic garb grew very powerful, as being a crime, a conspiracy, a form of rebellion. People would rob themselves of their food by day for the sake of the common meal at night.

[…]

Figure to yourself, on a broad moor, and often near an old Celtic cromlech, at the edge of a wood, this twofold scene: on one side a well-lit moor and a great feast of the people; on the other, towards yon wood, the choir of that church whose dome is heaven. What I call the choir is a hill commanding somewhat the surrounding country. Between these are the yellow flames of torch-fires, and some red brasiers emitting a fantastic smoke. At the back of all is the Witch, dressing up her Satan, a great wooden devil, black and shaggy. By his horns, and the goatskin near him, he might be Bacchus; but his manly attributes make him a Pan or a Priapus. It is a darksome figure, seen differently by different eyes; to some suggesting only terror, while others are touched by the proud melancholy wherein the Eternally Banished seems absorbed.[21]

[…]

Act First. The magnificent *In troit* taken by Christendom from antiquity, that is, from those ceremonies where the people in long procession streamed under the colonnades on their way to the sanctuary, is now taken back for himself by the elder god upon his return to power. The *Lavabo*, likewise borrowed from the heathen lustrations, reappears now. All this he claims

back by right of age.

His priestess is always called, by way of honor, the Elder; but she would sometimes have been young. Lancre tells of a witch of seventeen, pretty, and horribly savage.

The Devil's bride was not to be a child: she must be at least thirty years old, with the form of a Medea, with the beauty that comes of pain; an eye deep, tragic, lit up by a feverish fire, with great serpent tresses waving at their will: I refer to the torrent of her black untamable hair. On her head, perhaps, you may see the crown of vervain, the ivy of the tomb, the violets of death.

When she has had the children taken off to their meal, the service begins: "I will come before thine altar; but save me, O Lord, from the faithless and violent man (from the priest and the baron)."

Then come the denial of Jesus, the paying of homage to the new master, the feudal kiss, like the greetings of the Temple, when all was yielded without reserve, without shame, or dignity, or even purpose; the denial of an olden god being grossly aggravated by a seeming preference for Satan's back.

It is now his turn to consecrate his priestess. The wooden deity receives her in the manner of an olden Pan or Priapus. Following the old pagan form she sits a moment upon him in token of surrender, like the Delphian seeress on Apollo's tripod. After receiving the breath of his spirit, the sacrament of his love, she purifies herself with like formal solemnity. Thenceforth she is a living altar.

[…]

The Introit over, the service is interrupted for the feast. Contrary to the festive fashion of the nobles, who all sit with their swords beside them, here, in this feast of brethren, are no arms, not even a knife.

As a keeper of the peace, each has a woman with him. Without a woman no one is admitted. Be she a kinswoman or none, a wife or none; be she old or young, a woman he must bring with him.

What were the drinks passed round among them? Mead, or beer, or wine; strong cider or perry? The last two date from the twelfth century.

The illusive drinks, with their dangerous admixture of belladonna, did they already appear at that board? Certainly not. There were children there. Besides, an excess of commotion would have prevented the dancing.

This whirling dance, the famous *Sabbath-round*, was quite enough to complete the first stage of drunkenness. They turned back to back, their arms behind them, not seeing each other, but often touching each other's back. Gradually no one knew himself, nor whom he had by his side. The old wife then was old no more. Satan had wrought a miracle. She was still a woman, desirable, after a confused fashion beloved.

[…]

Act Second. Just as the crowd, grown dizzy together, was led, both by the attraction of the women and by a certain vague feeling of brotherhood, to imagine itself one body, the service was resumed at the *Gloria*. The altar, the host, became visible. These were represented by the woman herself. Prostrate, in a posture of extreme abasement, her long black silky tresses lost in the dust; she, this haughty Proserpine, offered up herself. On her back a demon officiated, saying the *Credo*, and making the offering.[22]

At a later period, this scene came to be immodest. But at this time, amidst the calamities of the fourteenth century, in the terrible days of the Black Plague, and of so many a famine, in the days of the Jacquerie and those hateful brigands, the Free Lances—on a people thus surrounded by danger, the effect was more than serious. The whole assembly had much cause to fear a surprise. The risk run by the Witch in this bold proceeding was very great, even tantamount to the forfeiting of her life. Nay, more; she braved a hell of suffering, of torments such as may hardly be described. Torn by pincers, and broken alive; her breasts torn out; her skin slowly singed, as in the case of the wizard bishop of Cahors; her body burned limb by limb on a small fire of red-hot coal, she was like to endure an eternity of agony.

Certainly all were moved when the prayer was spoken, the harvest-offering made, upon this devoted creature who gave herself up so humbly. Some wheat was offered to the *Spirit of the Earth*, who made wheat to grow. A flight of birds, most likely from the woman's bosom, bore to the *God of Freedom* the sighs and prayers of the serfs. What did they ask? Only that we, their distant descendants, might become free.[23]

What was the sacrament she divided among them? Not the ridiculous pledge we find later in the reign of Henry IV, but most likely that *confarreatio* which we saw in the case of the philtres, the hallowed pledge of love, a cake baked on her own body, on the victim who, perhaps, to-morrow

would herself be passing through the fire. It was her life, her death, they ate there. One sniffs already the scorching flesh.

Last of all they set upon her two offerings, seemingly of flesh; two images, one of *the latest dead*, the other of the newest-born in the district. These shared in the special virtue assigned to her who acted as altar and Host in one, and on these the assembly made a show of receiving the communion. Their Host would thus be threefold, and always human. Under a shadowy likeness of the Devil the people worshipped none other than its own self.

The true sacrifice was now over and done. The woman's work was ended when she gave herself up to be eaten by the multitude. Rising from her former posture, she would not withdraw from the spot until she had proudly stated, and, as it were, confirmed the lawfulness of her proceedings by an appeal to the thunderbolt, by an insolent defiance of the discrowned God.

In mockery of the *Agnus Dei*, and the breaking of the Christian Host, she brought a toad dressed up, and pulled it to pieces. Then rolling her eyes about in a frightful way she raised them to heaven, and beheading the toad, uttered these strange words: "Ah, *Philip*,[24] if I had you here, you should be served in the same manner!"

[…]

No answer being outwardly given to her challenge, no thunderbolt hurled upon her head, they imagine that she has triumphed over the Christ. The nimble band of demons seized their moment to astonish the people with various small wonders which amazed and overawed the more credulous. The toads, quite harmless in fact, but then accounted poisonous, were bitten and torn between their dainty teeth. They jumped over large fires and pans of live coal, to amuse the crowd and make them laugh at the fires of Hell.

Did the people really laugh after a scene so tragical, so very bold? I know not. Assuredly there was no laughing on the part of her who first dared all this. To her these fires must have seemed like those of the nearest stake. Her business rather lay in forecasting the future of that devilish monarchy, in creating the Witch to be.

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[1] This introduction is based on the section on Michelet in Ruben van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer: The Origins of Modern Religious Satanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[2] On Michelet's *Werdegang*, see Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975) pp. 154, 198–202, and Paul Bénichou, *Le temps des prophètes* ([Paris]: Éditions Gallimard, 1977) pp. 497–564.

[3] Michelet marked these two experiences as decisive himself; see Joseph Mali, *Mythistory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003) p. 86.

[4] Quoted in Mali, *Mythistory*, p. 86.

[5] Bénichou, *Le temps des prophètes*, p. 517. On Michelet's changing view of the Middle Ages, see Barbara G. Keller, *The Middle Ages reconsidered: Attitudes in France from the Eighteenth Century through the Romantic Movement* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994) pp. 151–157.

[6] Wouter Kusters, *La Sorcière: Nouvelle édition critique avec introduction, variantes et examen du manuscrit* (Nijmegen: s.i., 1989) pp. 20–21.

[7] Kusters, *La Sorcière*, p. 92.

[8] Kusters, *La Sorcière*, p. 60.

[9] Jules Michelet, *La Sorcière: Nouvelle édition* (Bruxelles: A. Lacroix, Verboeckhoven & Cie, 1867) p. 141.

[10] Michelet, *La Sorcière*, pp. 142–146.

[11] Michelet, *La Sorcière*, p. 146.

[12] Michelet, *La Sorcière*, p. 148.

[13] Michelet, *La Sorcière*, p. 152: "Sous l'ombre vague de Satan, le peuple n'adorait que le peuple."

[14] Michelet, *La Sorcière*, pp. 125, 127.

[15] Michelet, *La Sorcière*, p. 389.

[16] Kusters, *La Sorcière*, p. 25.

[17] Philippe Règnier, "Le chaudron idéologique de La Sorcière: féminisme, homéopathie et saint-simonisme," in *La Sorcière de Jules Michelet: L'envers de l'histoire*, ed. Paule Petitier (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2004) p. 145.

[18] Michelet, *La Sorcière*, p. 383.

[19] Kusters, *La Sorcière*, pp. 74, 72.

[20] Jules Michelet, *La Sorcière: The Witch of the Middle Ages (The Only Authorized English Translation)*, trans. L. J. Trotter. (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1863) pp. 149–156.

[21] Footnote in original: This is taken from Del Rio, but is not, I think, peculiar to Spain. It is an ancient trait, and marked by the primitive inspiration.

[22] Footnote in original: This important fact of the woman being her own altar, is known to us by the trial of La Voisin, which M. Ravaisson, Sen., is about to publish with the other *Papers of the Bastille*.

[23] Footnote in original: This grateful offering of wheat and birds is peculiar to France. In Lorraine, and no doubt in Germany, black beasts were offered, as the black cat, the black goat, or the black bull.

[24] Footnote in original: Lancre, 136. Why "Philip," I cannot say. By Satan Jesus is always called John or *Janicot* (Jack). Was she speaking of Philip of Valois, who brought on the wasting hundred years' war with England?

4

Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* (1871)

Fredrik Gregorius

Albert Pike was born on December 29, 1809, as the son of Ben and Sarah Pike, and one of his ancestors was the founder of Woodbridge, New Jersey.[1] Despite having passed the entrance exams to Harvard University, Pike chose to begin a program of self-education, after having had some issues with paying his tuition fees. Like many other men of his generation, Pike's future career would be filled with drastic changes, and he moved several times over the years. Originally a schoolteacher, he went on to become an explorer and hunter in New Mexico. After settling down in Little Rock, Arkansas, Pike began a career as a journalist and teacher. In 1835 he became the sole owner of *Arkansas Advocate*, the newspaper he had been writing for.[2] During this period he began studying law and wrote several books on the subject. Pike became a supporter of the Whig Party, the party that Abraham Lincoln belonged to before joining the Republicans. The Whig Party would be torn apart over the issue of slavery, which had become a more and more contested issue by the middle of the nineteenth century. Due to his party's refusal to take a clear stance on slavery, Pike became disillusioned with it, as he was strongly pro-slavery as well as anti-Catholic.[3]

Pike would become famous for two things: his military career, and his involvement in Freemasonry. His career in the military began with the Mexican-American war of 1846–1848, during which he rose to the rank of captain. When the civil war broke out in 1861, Pike, now a brigadier general, fought on the side of the Confederacy, primarily working to settle and uphold treaties with Native American tribes.[4] He later came into conflict with the Confederate army and was accused of mishandling money. It was also said

that his troops had scalped their enemies, although the latter accusation remained unsubstantiated. Pike was accused of treason and held in custody for a short time, but his resignation was later accepted and he returned to Arkansas.[5]

After his military career was over, Pike would spend more time focusing on his masonic work. He had been initiated into the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in 1840. In 1859 he was elected Sovereign Grand Commander of the Scottish Rite's Southern Jurisdiction and continued to act as Sovereign Grand Commander for the rest of his life.[6] While the term Southern Jurisdiction gives the impression that it is only related to the Southern states, in reality it included thirty-five states, among them Alaska. By contrast, the Northern Jurisdiction represents no more than fifteen states. The year 1871 witnessed the publication of Pike's most famous book, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*. This book has undergone several reprints and has become one of the most famous and notorious books about Masonry ever published, not least because of its references to Lucifer and Baphomet. Pike spent a significant amount of time developing the rituals and lectures for the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite. Despite being pro-slavery there is no evidence to substantiate the rumor that he was involved in writing the rituals for the antebellum organization the Ku Klux Klan.[7]

While Pike was not by any definition a Satanist or a Luciferian, the ambivalent description of Lucifer in *Morals and Dogma* has contributed to the image of him as the primary proponent of Luciferian Masonry. When the Leo Taxil hoax (see separate chapter in the present volume) started in France in the late 1880s, disseminating the idea that Masonry was a secret cult devoted to Lucifer, Albert Pike's name appeared as the leading and most sinister member of the Luciferian Masons. Pike himself would not have time to make any replies to the accusations directed at him by Taxil as he died at the age of eighty-one on April 2, 1891.[8]

Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry (1871)

Origin

Morals and Dogma was published in 1871 for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States, purportedly containing "the Lectures of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish rite in that jurisdiction." The first edition comprises 861 pages divided into thirty-two essays. The book contains lectures related to the rituals of the masonic degrees, but does not reveal any information that could be regarded as secret.[9] In 1909 the 218-page Digest-Index was added by Trevanion W. Hugo (a 33° Mason) making the book more accessible as it was now possible to browse through it by its topics. However, this also made it easier to quote *Morals and Dogma* and take passages out of context to support far-fetched and poorly substantiated interpretations of the book.

Content

Morals and Dogma is divided into thirty-two parts, each dealing with one of the degrees of the Scottish Rite, excluding the 33th. As mentioned above, it claims to be the collected wisdom of several philosophical and mystical schools and is based upon the idea that there is a universal form of religion that transcends confessional boundaries. What distinguished Pike's work from similar books is its very eclectic nature and the author's frequent references to "pagan" sources. The book clearly demonstrates Pike's indebtedness to the Egyptomania that was sweeping North America at the time, as it contains several mentions of Egyptian gods.[10]

Pike rejects the idea of one religion being superior to another and rather sees religious affiliation as a product of one's birth and circumstances in life:

> Man never had the right to usurp the unexercised prerogative of God, and condemn and punish another for his belief. Born in a Protestant land, we are of that faith. If we had opened our eyes to the light under the shadows of St. Peter's at Rome, we should have been devout Catholics; born in the Jewish quarter of Aleppo, we should have contemned Christ as an imposter; in Constantinople, we should have cried "Allah il Allah, God is great and Mahomet is his prophet!" Birth, place, and education give us our faith. Few believe in any religion because they have examined the evidences of its authenticity, and made up a formal judgment, upon weighing the testimony.[11]

To find truth, people must, in Pike's opinion, look beyond their own circumstances. This kind of thinking led to the idea of a form of universal religion.

The most controversial aspect of the book is unquestionably the references to Lucifer and Baphomet. Both have been used in attempts prove the allegedly Satanic nature of Masonry, and it has been claimed that Pike had

revealed more than he had meant to do. Lucifer is mentioned in two places in *Morals and Dogma*, and they both display a sense of ambivalence. The first passage, which is the most famous, reads:

> The true name of Satan, the Kabalists say, is that of Yahveh reversed; for Satan is not a black God, but the negation of God. The Devil is the personification of Atheism or Idolatry. For the Initiates, this is not a person, but a force, created for good, but which may serve for evil. It is the instrument of Liberty or free will. They represent this Force, which presides over the physical generation, under the mythologic and horned form of the God Pan; thence the he-goat of the Sabbat, brother of the Ancient Serpent, and the light bearer or Phosphor, of which the poets have made the false Lucifer of the legend.[12]

This quote echoes sentiments found in Eliphas Lévi's *Histoire de la Magie* (1860) closely enough that it is clear that Pike used this as his reference. While some have accused Pike of plagiarism, the latter openly states that he sees his work as a compilation of previous texts.[13] What is significant, however, is that even though the wording is similar in the passages by Pike and Lévi, the contexts in which they occur give the texts significantly different meanings. In Lévi's text, the relevant passage is part of a discussion about astral demons and their perversions. Overall, Lévi's text casts both the Sabbath and Lucifer in a more negative light even if other parts of his work contains more ambivalent, if not positive, interpretations of both Lucifer and Baphomet.[14]

The passage in *Morals and Dogma* is located in a discussion in which Pike contests the claims to any absolute or exclusive truth regarding the Bible and Christianity. Pike, like Lévi, rejects the idea that the ancients would have been without the light of God, and Pike wonders, "Did the Deity leave the whole world without Light for two score centuries, to illuminate only a little corner of Palestine and a brutal, ignorant and ungrateful people."[15] Thus, while it would be wrong to claim that Pike was a Satanist or Luciferian, the context in which he paraphrased Lévi shows that he at times understood those figures in a positive light and used the passage where he refers to them as part of a polemical discussion of certain aspects of Christianity. While Pike's text is quite abstruse, it is at times possible to see a type of Gnostic undertone in his writings, presenting Satan as the Lord of Matter, at times in opposition to the Angel of Light that incited humans to eat from the Tree of Knowledge (although this is part of a presentation of Manes' teachings and thus, one could argue, does not reflect Pike's own views).[16] In a similar way, Satan and

humans trapped in their material state has, according to Pike, a function comparable with that of the Egyptian god Typhon, following Plutarch´s identification of Typhon with Set.[17]

Providing a summary of *Morals and Dogma* is not a simple matter; it is a massive work, which is sometimes difficult to penetrate due to the use of Masonic symbols that are seldom explained. At times, it is also challenging to discern where Pike is attempting to describe the viewpoints of another religion, and when he is expressing his own ideas. Considering the book in the context of an ideology that views esoteric truth as residing beyond all religions, it could be argued that there is a tendency in the book that can be regarded as Gnostic in the sense that it portrays the God of the Old Testament as the creator, but also as a lower form of existence. Lucifer, despite at times being ambivalent, seems to be a symbol of liberty and enlightenment. Lucifer is, however, contrasted against Satan, who at times becomes identified with the God of the Old Testament. Still, Pike ultimately regarded himself as a Protestant Christian, and despite the plethora of esoteric doctrines presented, the morals taught in the book clearly represent a Protestant work ethic with a recurring rejection of so-called animal passions in favor of mental and spiritual discipline.[18]

Genre and Audience

Morals and Dogma contains lectures primarily meant for Masons in the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States, and must be read as commentaries to their specific degree rituals. The book presents itself as a collection of viewpoints gathered from a massive array of authors and philosophers, although most of the content is colored by Pike’s own perspective. *Morals and Dogma* does not seem to have been written for an audience outside the Masonic milieu even if it is not considered to be secret or forbidden to non-initiates.

Reception and Influence

From the early 1900s until 1969, a copy of *Morals and Dogma* was distributed to every Mason in the Southern Jurisdiction. After that, the book came to be seen as too advanced for new members. Still, it plays a significant role to this day. Outside the Southern Jurisdiction the book has been less influential, and it seems to have had little impact on Masonry in Europe.

Masonry aside, Pike appears to have influenced certain esoteric writers and to have helped popularize the image of esoteric Freemasonry. Pike is often quoted within Satanic and Luciferian groups to give a sense of tradition and legitimacy to their beliefs, often decontextualizing the abovementioned passages in order to make them more Luciferian. A similar decontextualizing can be found within the conspiracy theory milieu, where Pike is often used as evidence of Masonry's Satanic nature. One of the most famous examples of this is the Evangelical comic-book writer Jack T. Chick, who employs *Morals and Dogma* to prove the Satanic nature of Masonry in his famous anti-masonic track *The Curse of Baphomet.*[19] Such allegations are, of course, most frequently found in more Christianity-based conspiracy theories, often related to ideas about a coming Apocalypse and a Satanic New World Order.

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Excerpts from Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* (1871)

The true name of Satan, the Kabalists say, is that of Yahveh reversed; for Satan is not a black god, but the negation of God. The Devil is the personification of Atheism or Idolatry.[20]

For the Initiates, this is not a Person, but a Force, created for good, but which may serve for evil. It is the instrument of Liberty or Free Will. They represent this Force, which presides over the physical generation, under the mythologic and horned form of the God Pan; thence came the he-goat of the Sabbat, brother of the Ancient Serpent, and the Light-bearer or Phosphor, of which the poets have made the false Lucifer of the legend.

[…]

The belief in dualism in some shape, was universal. Those who held that everything emanated from God, aspired to God, and re-entered into God, believed that, among those emanations were two adverse Principles, of Light and Darkness, Good and Evil. This prevailed in Central Asia and in Syria; while in Egypt it assumed the form of Greek speculation. In the former, a second Intellectual Principle was admitted, active in its Empire of Darkness, audacious against the Empire of Light. So the Persians and Sabeans understood it. In Egypt, this second Principle was Matter, as the word was used by the Platonic School, with its sad attributes, Vacuity, Darkness, and Death. In their theory, matter could be animated only by the low communication of a principle of divine life. It resists the influences that would spiritualize it. That resisting Power is Satan, the rebellious Matter, Matter that does not partake of God.

To many there were two Principles; the Unknown Father, or Supreme and Eternal God, living in the center of the Light, happy in the perfect purity of His being; the other, eternal Matter, that inert, shapeless, darksome mass, which they considered as the source of all evils, the mother and dwelling-place of Satan.

[…]

There is in nature one most potent force, by means whereof a single man, who could possess himself of it, and should know how to direct it, could revolutionize and change the face of the world.

This force was known to the ancients. It is a universal agent, whose

Supreme law is equilibrium; and whereby, if science can but learn how to control it, it will be possible to change the order of the Seasons, to produce in night the phenomena of day, to send a thought in an instant round the world, to heal or slay at a distance, to give our words universal success, and make them reverberate everywhere.

This agent, partially revealed by the blind guesses of the disciples of Mesmer, is precisely what the Adepts of the middle ages called the elementary matter of the great work. The Gnostics held that it composed the igneous body of the Holy Spirit; and it was adored in the secret rites of the Sabbat or the Temple, under the hieroglyphic figure of Baphomet or the hermaphroditic goat of Mendes.

There is a Life-Principle of the world, a universal agent, wherein are two natures and a double current, of love and wrath. This ambient fluid penetrates everything. It is a ray detached from the glory of the Sun, and fixed by the weight of the atmosphere and the central attraction. It is the body of the Holy Spirit, the universal Agent, the Serpent devouring his own tail. With this electro-magnetic ether, this vital and luminous caloric, the ancients and the alchemists were familiar. Of this agent, that phase of modern ignorance termed physical science talks incoherently, knowing naught of it save its effects; and theology might apply to it all its pretended definitions of spirit. Quiescent, it is appreciable by no human sense; disturbed or in movement, none can explain its mode of action; and to term it a "fluid," and speak of its "currents," is but to veil a profound ignorance under a cloud of words.

Force attracts force, life attracts life, health attracts health. It is a law of nature.

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[1] Walter Lee Brown, *A Life of Albert Pike* (Fayetville: University of Arkansas Press, 1997) pp. 2–4.

[2] Brown, *A Life of Albert Pike*, pp. 47–50.

[3] "Albert Pike," in *Encylopedia of Arkansas*, http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=1737.

[4] Brown, *A Life of Albert Pike*, pp. 303–307.

[5] Mark C. Carnes, "Albert Pike," in *American National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[6] The Scottish Rite is one of the oldest and most popular forms of Freemasonry. It consists of 33 degrees and is non-confessional. The first reference to its existence is probably from 1730s. Today it is the most common form of Masonry in the United States and the United Kingdom.

[7] Carnes, "Albert Pike," is, however, more open to the possibility that Pike wrote the rituals for the

Ku Klux Klan. For a rebuttal of these claims, see "Albert Pike did not found the Ku Klux Klan" http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/anti-masonry/kkk.html.

[8] Gareth Medway, *Lure of the Sinister* (New York: New York University Press, 2001).

[9] Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* (Richmond: L.H. Jenkins, 1947) p. iv.

[10] See Scott Trafton, *Egypt Land: Race and Nineteenth-Century American Egyptomania* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004) for an analysis of late nineteenth-century Egyptomania and its relationship to the issues of race and slavery.

[11] Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, p. 165.

[12] Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, p. 102.

[13] Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, p. iii.

[14] Eliphas Lévi, *The History of Magic* (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1999) pp. 158–161.

[15] Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, p. 102.

[16] Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, pp. 565ff.

[17] Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, p. 376.

[18] Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, pp. 31, 857.

[19] Jack T. Chick, *The Curse of Baphomet* (Chick Publications, 1991).

[20] Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* (New York: Masonic Publishing Co., 1871) pp. 102, 272, 374.

5

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (The Theosophical Society), *The Secret Doctrine* (1888)

Per Faxneld

The first person to present a positive understanding of Satan in an exclusively *esoteric or religious* (as opposed to literary or political) context was, it would seem, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891), the chief ideologist of the Theosophical Society.[1]

Even though almost six hundred biographies of Blavatsky have been published, many things regarding her life are still far from clear or well documented. She was born in a noble family in Yekaterinoslav, Russia (present-day Dnipro, Ukraine), and married a considerably older man at age sixteen. A fiercely independent personality, she subsequently ran away from her husband and travelled the world. For a period of time, she worked as a Spiritualist medium in Cairo. Later, she would claim to have studied voodoo in New Orleans, crossed the prairie together with Native Americans, and to have experienced many other more or less incredible adventures. Most controversially, she told of her journey to the closed and inaccessible country of Tibet, where she had supposedly been initiated into esoteric wisdom by mysterious masters.[2]

In 1873, Blavatsky moved to New York. Together with the lawyer William Quan Judge (1851–1896) and the journalist, lawyer, and former military colonel Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907), she co-founded the Theosophical Society there in 1875. Its purpose was, initially, simply to study occult teachings. Later on, objectives were added pertaining to establishing a universal brotherhood encompassing all of humanity, investigating paranormal powers in humans and unexplained laws of nature, and studying comparative religion, philosophy, and science. Much like Spiritualism a few decades earlier, Theosophy quickly became a successful semi-mass

movement, albeit with a more well-educated and middle- to upper-class membership.

By 1889 the Theosophical Society had 227 sections all over the world, and several of the era's most important intellectuals and artists were strongly influenced by it. Avant-garde painters, especially, took this new teaching to heart, and it marked the work of artists such as Piet Mondrian (1872–1944), Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944), and Paul Klee (1879–1940), as well as, out of the public eye, Sweden's Hilma af Klint (1862–1944). Authors like future Nobel Prize laureate William Butler Yeats (1865–1939) became members too, incorporating Theosophical motifs in their writings.[3] Theosophy was a movement that most educated persons at the time were aware of. Frequently debated and reported on in newspapers, it had a high visibility. Though the actual membership of the main Theosophical group never reached more than 40,000 (in the late 1920s, at which time there were also several competing groups with a smaller membership), the broader cultural impact was enormous.[4] Many read and were inspired by Theosophical literature even if they never considered membership. Later off-shoots like Anthroposophy (founded 1912/1913) also became influential.

Theosophical interest in Buddhist and Hindu teachings, as well as the implications of the ideas about universal brotherhood, resulted in certain anti-colonial sentiments in the movement. A markedly anti-clerical current, it also allied itself with other forces working for social and religious liberation, including suffragettes, socialists, and the aforementioned modernist avant-gardes in literature and art. Yet, the relationship to such forces of upheaval and reform seems to have been a troubled one at times, and there were also individuals and groups within Theosophy that were conservative when it came to most questions other than religious ones. Racism was also very much present in some writings (including texts by Blavatsky, e.g., on Indigenous Australians) and attitudes, in spite of the universalist rhetoric.[5]

The basic idea in Theosophy is that all religions contain an esoteric kernel of truth, which has been misunderstood by exoteric priesthoods and laymen. By digging out this kernel, buried under layers of dogma, the esotericist can create a synthesis and arrive at the true, divine wisdom. It is similarly possible to integrate the findings of the modern natural sciences into this endeavor, bridging the supposed gap between religion and science, while simultaneously directing criticism against the perceived materialism of contemporary culture. A spiritual evolution, and a transmutation of the

individual, can thus be accomplished. These goals are embedded in a complex cosmology stipulating a series of evolutionary stages involving planets, civilizations, and "Root Races." Finally, it should be added that Theosophy has put an emphasis on being non-dogmatic, thus allowing considerable room for highly individual interpretations of its tenets.[6]

Though Colonel Olcott was the president of the Theosophical Society, Blavatsky arguably remained its most important ideologue until her death in 1891. Partly, her special authority came from claims regarding being in contact with what later became known as the Great White Brotherhood—consisting of enlightened Masters, *Mahatmas*, who had chosen her as their apostle and communicated their esoteric wisdom via mysteriously appearing letters and astral visitations. A scandal where the "Mahatma letters" were supposedly proven to be fabricated by Blavatsky, and their appearance in a locked cabinet a mere trick involving a hidden compartment, rocked the movement in 1885, but has generally not been taken as definite proof of fraudulence on Blavatsky's part by historians.[7]

The Secret Doctrine (1888)

Origin

The two most widely disseminated books by Blavatsky (though perhaps not the most widely read, at least not in their entirety, given how voluminous they are: over 1,200 and almost 1,500 pages, respectively) were *Isis Unveiled* (1877) and *The Secret Doctrine* (1888). The latter is the source of the excerpt in the present chapter. Both were written with extensive help from several collaborators.

For *Isis Unveiled* Blavatsky—whose first language was, of course, not English—received assistance from Colonel Olcott, who edited her text heavily and wrote some sections himself. *The Secret Doctrine* came into being under somewhat similar circumstances. Arriving in London in 1887, Blavatsky brought with her a chaotic and utterly disorganized manuscript of several thousand pages, making a pile over three feet high. This was edited into something manageable by the young Theosophists Archibald Keightley (1859–1930) and Bertram Keightley (1860–1944) in cooperation with several others. The junior scientist and novelist Ed Fawcett (1866–1960) helped with quotations and wrote many pages for the sections on science, especially

related to Darwinian evolutionism.[8] However, it seems no one other than Blavatsky was involved specifically with the passages where she praises Satan—at least not anyone communicating suggestions on the ordinary plane of existence, as she did claim to have received instructions from two "masters" throughout the writing process, and to have read in the astral counterparts of books when she required information about specific topics.[9]

Already in *Isis Unveiled*, Blavatsky discussed the Devil in some detail. Her chapter about the figure there was, however, mostly a sarcastic exposé of the beliefs held by Christians concerning the Devil, which she found singularly ridiculous.[10] The only tendency toward a celebration of Satan was a short encapsulation—half a page in a fifty-six page chapter—of a Kabalistic view of him as a blind antagonistic force that is necessary for the vitality, development, and vigor of the principle of good.[11] Satan was also mentioned in a handful of other places in this book, outside of the chapter dedicated to him, but in most instances what we find are variations of phrasings like "the existence of the Devil is a fiction, which no theology is able to demonstrate."[12] In the eleven years between this work and her influential *The Secret Doctrine*, Blavatsky changed her views on several topics—such as the concept of reincarnation, which she had earlier dismissed.[13] Satan, too, was now seen in an entirely different way.

Blavatsky's new sympathy for the Devil was evinced slightly before the publication of *The Secret Doctrine*. From September 1887 onward, Blavatsky published a journal named *Lucifer*. The initiating of this project can be seen as part of an ongoing power struggle between her and Olcott, and it was to serve as an alternative to the periodical under his control, *The Theosophist*.[14] She insisted the name of her journal was definitely not an expression of Satanism, though there can be little doubt that the name was chosen partly in order to provoke conservative Christians and other ideological opponents. The strikingly positive view of Satan that she presented the next year in *The Secret Doctrine* also makes it obvious that a double entendre of some kind was intended.

In the editorial for the first issue, Blavatsky (who was, judging by the style, likely its author) dismisses the misunderstanding of the name Lucifer as exclusively infernal and claims that "the title for our magazine is as much associated with divine and pious ideas as with the supposed rebellion of the hero of Milton's 'Paradise Lost.' "[15] But in the same editorial she also writes

about Satan in “Milton’s superb fiction’ that if one analyzes his rebellion, ‘it will be found of no worse nature than an assertion of free-will and independent thought, as if Lucifer had been born in the XIXth century.”[16] In other words, she practically presents Satan as a freedom fighter. Further, it seems she figured the shock value of the name could serve a pedagogical purpose: “to force the weak-hearted to look truth straight in the face, is helped most efficaciously by a title belonging to the category of branded names.”[17] This might conceivably also be a motivation for her discussion of Satan in *The Secret Doctrine*.

Blavatsky, like any other well-read person in the late nineteenth century, was naturally familiar with the main works of English Romantic Satanists like Byron and Shelley—who had taken Milton’s portrayal of Satan as the starting point for their own radical re-interpretations.[18] In her writings, she refers to these authors several times, and an 1882 article of hers contains a discussion of the Italian romantic Giosué Carducci’s anticlerical poem “Inno a Satana” (composed in 1863, and published 1865), which is perhaps one of the most programmatic and explicit examples of the tropes of literary Satanism.[19] It is hence obvious that Blavatsky’s conception of Satan in *The Secret Doctrine* draws on the romantics’ use of him as a symbol of independence, defiant rebellion and liberation from oppression. The innovation is that he is now incorporated into a well-developed esoteric cosmology.

Content

Spanning 1,500 pages, *The Secret Doctrine* is divided into two parts: *Cosmogenesis* and *Anthropogenesis*. At its core are what Blavatsky claimed were translations from, and commentaries on, a work named the *Book of Dzyan*. This secret text was, she stated, written in a language called *Senzar*, known only to esoteric initiates (it should be noted that the existence of this text, or the language it is supposed to have been written in, is not confirmed by any historical sources). Blavatsky devotes most of her book to explaining the esoteric meaning of symbols and mythic motifs from the religions of the world, and to describing the evolution of the cosmos and of humans, through a series of stages, to higher spiritual levels. She also positions her worldview in relation to the natural science of her day, offering a critique of what she perceives as its many misconceptions.

The celebrations of Satan are not a key theme in *The Secret Doctrine*. In total, the passages in question do not constitute a substantial part of the almost 1,500 pages of the two volumes. For context, we can consider that in the index of a fourteen-volume edition of her collected works (which does not include *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*) the references to Satanism, the Devil, Lucifer, and Satan take up about one and a half pages. This we can then compare to the references to Buddha and Buddhism, which fill over six pages in the index, while the list of references to Christ and Jesus take up a little over four pages. Used in this manner an index is admittedly a rather blunt tool, and we should refrain from overstating the importance of the frequency of occurrence of certain words. It still does say *something*, and wide reading of Blavatsky's works seems to bear this "statistical" tendency out. If a figure from religious myth holds a special and prominent position above all others in Blavatsky's writings, it is beyond doubt the Buddha.[20] Thus, it would be absurd to label Blavatsky a Satanist, if the definition of Satanism used stipulates that Satan must hold the most prominent place among the symbols or entities being revered.[21] All the same, it remains clear that *The Secret Doctrine*, her probably most influential book, contains a fair number of explicit celebrations of Satan, and that this is a uniquely early instance of such unequivocal praise being heaped on the figure in an esoteric context rather than in the realm of politics or romantic and Decadent literature.

Blavatsky argues that Satan—or Lucifer, or the Devil, as she often uses the names interchangeably[22]—brought humankind spiritual wisdom by offering us the forbidden fruit from the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden. He is therefore "the spirit of Intellectual Enlightenment and Freedom of Thought,"[23] and the so-called Fall of Man was in fact a positive event, an initiation into esoteric knowledge. Like the romantics, she draws a parallel between Satan and Prometheus.[24] Satan's function as a cultural hero in the same spirit as the Greek Titan is evident in the Bible, she claims, provided it is read correctly.[25]

In her discussion of the Fall of Man in Genesis 3, Blavatsky produces a counter-reading that is, in one sense, at odds with her overall cosmology. Elsewhere, she clearly states that there is no creator God, and no opposition between God and Satan, both of which are but powers within humans themselves, each useful in its own right.[26] All this is contradicted in said

passage, where God is portrayed as the creator of humans and Satan as humanity's liberator from the shackles forged by this tyrant. Both also, oddly, come across much like sentient personages with an independent existence. This, of course, should not be taken literally. The narrative in Genesis 3, Blavatsky says, needs to be interpreted allegorically in order for the core of true events to be discerned behind the veils of mythical ornamentation. Regardless of the level of abstraction or symbolic form, there can be no doubt that Blavatsky views the figure of Satan in this myth as an unequivocally good force, a helper and friend of humankind.[27]

An important building block in Blavatsky's construction of Satan was contemporary (semi-)scholarly understandings of ancient Gnosticism. Gnosticism in late antiquity has been associated with the doctrine that the physical world was created by a false god, the evil *Demiurge*, and that the divine spark that was humanity's birthright had been imprisoned within the flesh of our earthly bodies. Several of them, just like Blavatsky, viewed the serpent as a bringer of *gnosis*, spiritual enlightenment (however, they did not, as mainstream Christian theologians did, identify the serpent with Satan). It is important to remember here that the understanding of ancient Gnosticism was limited at this time, as most of the important primary sources written by actual Gnostics had not yet been discovered, and the polemics directed against such groups by the Church Fathers still colored perceptions to a very high degree.[28]

Among the books Blavatsky drew most heavily upon (and at times even quoted verbatim without mentioning that the words were not her own) when she wrote *Isis Unveiled* was C. W. King's *The Gnostics and Their Remains* (1864, revised ed. 1887), and the term *gnosis* would remain consistently prominent in her technical vocabulary.[29] Gnosticism plays a significant part in *The Secret Doctrine* as well, and King is referenced in the discussion concerning Satan.[30] In King's account of Gnostic ideas, however, there is little support for a positive view of Satan. Moreover, maintaining the later Christian identification of the serpent in Eden with the Devil—which the Gnostics, as mentioned, did not ascribe to—is Blavatsky's own initiative. In spite of such divergences, she explicitly points to the Gnostics as possessing the true understanding of the meaning of the supposedly evil powers symbolized by the dragon, the serpent, and the goat.[31]

A further source of inspiration for Blavatsky was French occultist Eliphas

Lévi (1810–1875, see the chapter on him in the present volume), who is the overall most prominent reference in *Isis Unveiled* (being quoted on no fewer than thirty-three separate occasions).[32] While his early political work contained celebrations of Satan as a noble rebel, who would eventually be reconciled with God in the manner also proposed by French romantic writers, Lévi did not really advocate an esoteric Satanism, that is, an integration of an unequivocally positive Satan into an esoteric cosmology. In some of Lévi's esoteric works, however, Satan is interpreted as synonymous with what he called the *astral light*—a force pervading the entire universe that can be used for both good and evil purposes.[33] He hereby somewhat relativized the understanding of the figure among occultists, preparing the way for Blavatsky's more straightforward pro-Satanic speculations. In *The Secret Doctrine*, Lévi remains important, even if Blavatsky criticizes him for trying to reconcile his ideas concerning Satan with the dogma of the Catholic Church.[34] Blavatsky placed no such constraints upon herself. Her celebration of Satan goes much further than the ambiguous esoteric ideas of Lévi concerning Satan as the astral light. Yet this basic concept still largely underlies her understanding of the Devil as an impersonal force permeating human and cosmos, making both dynamic.

Interestingly, Blavatsky insists on the unity of Jehovah and the serpent that tempted Eve. They are one and the same, and only the ignorance of the Church Fathers has degraded the serpent into a devil.[35] This is in line with Blavatsky's *monist* ideas, that is, she held that everything is ultimately one. Simultaneously, however, she was a strong believer in (esoteric) evolution. Thus, everything being one does not entail that stasis is desirable, and for evolution to run its course there is a need for (seemingly) antagonistic forces: Satan and evil, she proposes, have an important part to play in evolution.[36] Given the heavy focus on a type of esoteric evolution (not to be confused with Darwinian, biological evolution—a model that Blavatsky rejected) in Theosophy, it is also unsurprising that the development in humanity set in motion by the Fall should be considered something positive. In the Theosophical cosmology, the nature of the universe is forward motion.[37] Humankind breaking free from stasis, disrupting equilibrium by eating the forbidden fruit, is therefore logically a fortunate event (in a rather different sense than Aquinas' *felix culpa*).

The creature causing the Fall seems to have been humans themselves, with

no help from an *external* serpent or Satan. Blavatsky explicitly denies the existence of Satan "in the objective or even subjective world (in the ecclesiastical sense)."[38] That Satan does not exist in the "ecclesiastical" sense does not mean he lacks existence. Blavatsky simply locates him elsewhere than in a fiery hell: "Satan, or the Red *Fiery* Dragon, the 'Lord of Phosphorus' (brimstone was a theological improvement), and *Lucifer*, or 'Light-Bearer,' is in us: it is our *Mind*—our tempter and Redeemer, our intelligent liberator and Saviour from pure animalism."[39] Blavatsky proclaims that "esoteric philosophy shows that man is truly the manifested deity in both its aspects—good and evil."[40] God and Satan are, then, both aspects contained within humans themselves. They are still directly connected to the divine, and Blavatsky explains that Satan is "the emanation of the very essence of the pure divine principle *Mahat* (Intelligence), which radiates direct from the *Divine mind*." Without Satan, "we would be surely no better than animals."[41]

Genre and Audience

The purpose of *The Secret Doctrine* is to provide an in-depth presentation and elucidation of the Theosophical esoteric worldview of Madame Blavatsky. Intended to be a refinement of the imperfect presentation of her ideas in *Isis Unveiled*, it discusses motifs from a number of religious traditions, attempting to create a synthesis and reconceptualization of them.[42] Filled with abstruse language, digressions, and obscure references, it is not an easy book to digest for the casual reader. In spite of this, it sold well and appealed quite broadly.

The reason for this was probably how strongly its themes related to contemporary interests and anxieties. It arrived in a time of rapid globalization, when the natural sciences (especially Darwinian evolutionism), archaeology, philology, comparative religion, and higher (historical) Bible criticism were shaking the authority of Christianity. Yet, not all who were losing their faith in traditional Christianity felt satisfied with materialistic science as an alternative. Theosophy and *The Secret Doctrine* provided a third alternative, moreover catering to those who were developing doubts regarding the superiority of "Western" religion and culture in general. Finally, it benefited from the period's fascination with secret teachings, traditionally preserved within closed groups like Rosicrucians and

Freemasons. Like Blavatsky's earlier work, *The Secret Doctrine* made ideas from older esoteric currents (here merged with concepts from Hindu and Buddhist contexts, such as reincarnation and karma) easily available for the public—which, again, is not to say the text itself is particularly accessible, being a fairly technical expounding of esoteric cosmology.

Blavatsky was known for her coarse, sarcastic sense of humor, and tendency to spout inflammatory opinions. Severely hostile toward most of the established, conventional forms of Christianity, she still revered the true, esoteric core she felt they contained. Accordingly, she could make statements like the following: "The esoteric pearl of Christ's religion degraded into Christian theology, may indeed be said to have chosen a strange and unfitting *shell* to be born in and evolved from."[43] Blavatsky's esoteric re-interpretation of Satan was thus part of an extensive confrontation with the Christianity dominating her surroundings. Demonstrating that mainstream Christianity had completely misunderstood the nature of one its central figures, Satan, could function as a way to undermine its spiritual authority in general. However, her presentation of Satan was likely also an earnest part of her broader esoteric cosmology, not just a rhetorical, strategic provocation or a move intended to delegitimate a competing teaching.

Reception and Influence

Initially published in an edition of a mere five hundred copies by Theosophical Publishing Co., Ltd., in London, *The Secret Doctrine* sold out before being printed and then went through a second printing in the same year. A revised edition was published posthumously in 1893, with the changes mostly being corrections of English errors.[44] The book has been translated into a great number of languages, including German, French, Spanish, Russian, and Swedish. Later editions include an abridged one published by a Penguin imprint, testifying to its status as a classic of esotericism (and its mainstream recognition).[45]

Theosophists generally seem to have taken little notice of Blavatsky's revaluation of Satan in the book. Perhaps such an aggressively provocative, transgressive conceptualization of a controversial symbol simply did not fit with the inclusive approach of the broader Theosophical project—and was therefore downplayed or ignored as irrelevant. Whatever the explanation, it is more surprising that Theosophy's enemies do not seem have paid much

attention to it either. “Satanism” would of course have been the perfect brush to tar Blavatsky with if one wanted to vilify her, but this tactic does not really seem to have been employed at the time.

Several Theosophical feminists, however, did acknowledge the pro-Satanic passages and utilized the implications of Blavatsky’s re-interpretation of the Fall for polemical purposes. In Christian theology, Eve’s susceptibility to the arguments of Satan in the Garden of Eden had long been used as justification for the subjugation of woman to her husband, and for her exclusion from priestly office. It was also used, even in the nineteenth century, as grounds to argue that women should not receive medical help with alleviating birth pains, as this was part of her punishment from God for eating of the forbidden fruit. Drawing on Blavatsky, feminists during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries could now subvert this narrative and make a heroine of Eve as the first to understand that Satan brought humankind *gnosis* and freedom. This idea was presented in feminist polemics published in Theosophical journals, as well as in, for example, *The Woman’s Bible* (ed. Elizabeth Cady Stanton et al., 2 vols., 1895 and 1898)—the first large-scale systematic attempt at feminist exegesis.[46]

In a pioneering manner, Blavatsky applied established tropes of political and literary Satanism in an esoteric context and was thus instrumental in creating a shift in how the figure came to be viewed by esotericists. She exerted a great influence on later figures who constructed more or less Satanic systems, such as Ben Kadosh (Carl William Hansen, 1872–1936, see chapter in the present book), Gregor A. Gregorius (Eugen Grosche, 1888–1964), and Pekka Siitoin (1944–2003).[47] In fact, their understanding of Satan could be said to be more or less directly traced on Blavatsky’s. To a lesser extent, she may also have inspired how, for example, Aleister Crowley (1875–1947, see chapter in the present book) and Stanislaw Przybyszewski (1868–1927, see chapter in the present book) perceived the Devil.

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Excerpts from Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The*

Secret Doctrine (1888)

The Beings, or the Being, collectively called Elohim, who first (if ever) pronounced the cruel words, "Behold, the man is become *as one of us*, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live for ever . . . " must have been indeed the Ilda-baoth, the *Demiurge* of the Nazarenes, filled with rage and envy against his own creature, whose reflection created *Ophiomorphos.*[48] In this case it is but natural—even from the dead letter standpoint—to view *Satan*, the Serpent of Genesis, as the real creator and benefactor, the Father of Spiritual mankind. For it is he who was the "Harbinger of Light," bright radiant Lucifer, who opened the eyes of the automaton *created* by Jehovah, as alleged; and he who was the first to whisper: "in the day ye eat thereof ye shall be as Elohim, knowing good and evil"—can only be regarded in the light of a Saviour. An "adversary" to Jehovah the "*personating* spirit," he still remains in esoteric truth the ever-loving "Messenger" (the angel), the Seraphim and Cherubim who both *knew* well, and *loved* still more, and who conferred on us spiritual, instead of physical immortality—the latter a kind of *static* immortality that would have transformed man into an undying "Wandering Jew."

[…]

Hence the allegory of Prometheus, who steals the divine fire so as to allow men to proceed consciously on the path of spiritual evolution, thus transforming the most perfect of *animals* on earth into a potential god, and making him free to "take the kingdom of heaven by violence." Hence also, the *curse* pronounced by Zeus against Prometheus, and by Jehovah-Il-da-Baoth against his "rebellious son," Satan. The cold, pure snows of the Caucasian mountain and the never-dying, singeing fire and flames of an extinguishable hell. Two poles, yet the same idea; the dual aspect of a refined torture: a *fire producer*—the personified emblem of [[*Phosphoros*]] of the astral fire and light in the *anima mundi*—(that element of which the German materialist philosopher Moleschott said: "ohne *phosphor* kein gedanke," *i.e.*, without phosphorus no thought), burning in the fierce flames of his terrestrial passions; the conflagration fired by his *Thought*, discerning as it now does

good from evil, and yet a slave to the passions of its earthly Adam; feeling the vulture of doubt and full consciousness gnawing at its heart—a *Prometheus indeed*, *because* a *conscious*, hence a *responsible* entity.[49] The curse of *life* is great, yet how few are those men, outside some Hindu and Sufi mystics, who would exchange all the tortures of conscious life, all the evils of a responsible existence, for the unconscious perfection of a passive (objectively) *incorporeal* being, or even the universal static Inertia personified in Brahma during his "night's" rest. (. . .)

[…]

It *is* "Satanic" from the standpoint of orthodox Romanism, for it is owing to the prototype of that which became in time the Christian Devil—to the Radiant Archangels, Dhyans-Chohans, who refused to create, because they wanted Man *to become his own creator* and an immortal god— that men can reach *Nirvana* and the haven of heavenly divine Peace.

To close this rather lengthy comment, the Secret Doctrine teaches that the Fire-Devas, the Rudras, and the Kumaras, the "Virgin-Angels," (to whom Michael and Gabriel, the Archangels, both belong), the divine "Rebels"—called by the *all-materializing* and positive Jews, the *Nahash* or "Deprived"—preferred the curse of *incarnation* and the long cycles of terrestrial existence and rebirths, to seeing the misery (even if *unconscious*) of the beings (evolved as shadows out of their Brethren) through the semi-passive energy of their *too spiritual* Creators. If "man's uses of life should be such as neither to animalize nor to spiritualize, but to *humanize* Self,"[50] before he can do so, he must be born *human* not angelic. Hence, tradition shows the celestial *Yogis* offering themselves as voluntary victims in order to redeem Humanity—created god-like and perfect at first—and to endow him with human affections and aspirations. To do this they had to give up their natural status and, descending on our globe, take up their abode on it for the whole cycle of the Mahayuga, thus exchanging their impersonal individualities for individual personalities—the bliss of sidereal existence for the curse of terrestrial life. This voluntary sacrifice of the Fiery Angels, whose nature was *Knowledge* and *Love*, was construed by the exoteric theologies into a statement that shows "the rebel angels hurled down from heaven into the darkness of Hell"—our Earth. Hindu philosophy hints at the truth by teaching that the *Asuras* hurled down by Siva, are only in an

intermediate state in which they prepare for higher degrees of purification and redemption from their wretched condition; but Christian theology, claiming to be based on the rock of divine love, charity, and justice of him it appeals to as its Saviour—has invented, to enforce that claim paradoxically, the dreary dogma of hell, that Archimedean lever of Roman Catholic philosophy.

As to Rabbinical Wisdom—than which there is none more positive, materialistic, or grossly terrestrial, as it brings everything down to physiological mysteries—it calls these Beings, the "Evil One"; and the Kabalists—*Nahash*, "Deprived," as just said, and the *Souls*, that have thrown themselves, *after having been alienated in Heaven from the Holy One*, into an abyss at the dawn of their very existence, and have anticipated the time when they are to descend on earth (*Zohar* iii., 61, *C*).

And let me explain at once that our quarrel is not with the *Zohar* and the Kabala in their right interpretation—for the latter is ours—but only with the gross, *pseudo*-esoteric explanations of the later, and especially those of the Christian Kabalists.

[…]

It is in the religious doctrines of the Gnostics that the real meaning of the Dragon, the Serpent, the Goat, and all those symbols of powers now called *Evil*, can be seen the best; as it is they who divulged the esoteric nature of the Jewish Substitute for *AIN-SOPH in their* teachings; of the true meaning of which, while the Rabbins concealed it, the Christians, with a few exceptions, knew nothing. Surely Jesus of Nazareth would have hardly advised his apostles to show themselves as *wise* as the serpent, had the latter been a symbol of the *Evil one*; nor would the Ophites, the learned Egyptian Gnostics of "the Brotherhood of the Serpent," have reverenced a living snake in their ceremonies as the emblem of *WISDOM*, the divine *Sophia* (and a type of the all-good, not the all-bad), were that reptile so closely connected with Satan. The fact is, that even as a common ophidian it has ever been a dual symbol; and as a Dragon it had never been anything else than a symbol of the manifested Deity in its great Wisdom. The *Draco volans*, the flying Dragon of the early painters, may be an exaggerated picture of the real extinct antediluvian animal; but those who have faith in the Occult teachings believe that in the days of old there were such creatures as flying Dragons, or a kind

of Pterodactyl, and that it is those gigantic winged lizards that served as the prototypes for the Seraph of Moses and his great Brazen Serpent.[51] The Jews had worshipped the latter *idol* themselves, but, after the religious reforms brought about by Hezekiah, turned round, and called that symbol of the great or Higher God of every other nation—a Devil, and their own usurper—the "One God."[52]

The appellation Sa'tan, in Hebrew *satan*, "an adversary" (from the verb *shatana*, "to be adverse," to persecute) belongs by right to the first and cruelest "*adversary of all the other gods*"—Jehovah, not to the Serpent, which spoke only words of sympathy and wisdom, and is at the worst, even in the dogma, "the adversary of men." This dogma, based as it is on chapter iii. of *Genesis*, is as illogical and unjust as it is paradoxical. For who was the first to *create* that original and hence-forward universal tempter of man—the woman? Not the serpent surely, but the "Lord God" himself, who, saying: —"It is not good that the man should be alone"—made woman, and "brought her unto the man" (18–22). If the unpleasant little incident that followed *was* and is still to be regarded as the "original sin," then it exhibits the Creator's divine foresight in a poor light indeed. It would have been far better for the first Adam (of chap. 1.) to have been left either "male and female," or "alone." It is the Lord God, evidently, who was the real cause of all the mischief, the "*agent provocateur*," and the Serpent—only a prototype of *Azazel*, "the scapegoat for the sin of (the God of) Israel," the poor *Tragos* having to pay the penalty for his Master's and Creator's blunder. This, of course, is addressed only to those who accept the opening events of the drama of humanity in *Genesis* in their dead-letter sense. Those who read them esoterically, are not reduced to fanciful speculations and hypothesis; *they know* how to read the symbolism therein contained, and cannot err.

There is at present no need to touch upon the mystic and manifold meaning of the name Jehovah in its abstract sense, one independent of the Deity *falsely* called by that name. It was a blind created purposely by the Rabbins, a secret preserved by them with ten-fold care after the Christians had despoiled them of this God-name which was their own property.[53] But the following statement is made. The personage who is named in the first four chapters of *Genesis* variously as "God," the "Lord God," and "Lord" simply, is not one and the same person; certainly it is not *Jehovah.* There are three distinct classes or groups of the Elohim called Sephiroth in the Kabala, Jehovah appearing only in chapter iv, in the first verse of which he is named Cain, and

in the last transformed into *mankind*—male and female, Jah-veh.[54] The "Serpent," moreover, is not Satan, but the bright Angel, one of the *Elohim* clothed in radiance and glory, who, promising the woman that if they ate of the forbidden fruit "*ye shall not surely die*," kept his promise, and made man immortal in his *incorruptible nature*. He is the Iao of the mysteries, the chief of the Androgyne creators of men. Chapter iii. contains (esoterically) the withdrawal of the veil of ignorance that closed the perceptions of the Angelic Man, made in the image of the "Boneless" gods, and the opening of his consciousness to his real nature; thus showing the bright Angel (Lucifer) in the light of a giver of Immortality, and as the "Enlightener"; while the real Fall into generation and matter is to be sought in chapter iv. There, Jehovah-Cain, the male part of Adam the *dual* man, having separated himself from Eve, creates in her "Abel," *the first natural woman*,[55] and sheds the *Virgin blood*. Now Cain, being shown identical with Jehovah, on the authority of the correct reading of verse i. (chapter iv., Genesis), in the original Hebrew text; and the Rabbins teaching that "*Kin* (Cain), the Evil, was the Son of Eve by Samael, the devil who took Adam's place"; and the Talmud adding that "the evil Spirit, Satan, and Samael, the angel of Death, are the same"—(*Babba Battra*, 16*a*)—it becomes easy to see that Jehovah (*mankind*, or "Jah-hovah") and Satan (therefore the tempting Serpent) are one and the same in every particular. *There is no Devil, no Evil, outside mankind to produce a Devil.* Evil is a necessity in, and one of the supporters of the manifested universe. It is a necessity for progress and evolution, as night is necessary for the production of Day, and Death for that of Life—*that man may live for ever*.

Satan represents metaphysically simply the *reverse or the polar opposite* of everything in nature.[56] He is the "adversary," allegorically, the "murderer," and the great Enemy of *all*, because there is nothing in the whole universe that has not two sides—the reverses of the same medal. But in that case, light, goodness, beauty, etc., may be called Satan with as much propriety as the Devil, since they are the *adversaries* of darkness, badness, and ugliness. And now the philosophy and the *rationale* of certain early Christian sects—called *heretical* and viewed as the abomination of the times—will become more comprehensible. We may understand how it was that the sect of Satanians came to be degraded, and were anathematized without any hope of vindication in a future day, since they kept their tenets secret. How, on the same principle, the Cainites came to be degraded, and even the (Judas) Iscariotes; the true character of the *treacherous* apostle having never been

correctly presented before the tribunal of Humanity.

As a direct consequence, the tenets of the Gnostic sects also become clear. Each of these sects was founded by an Initiate, while their tenets were based on the correct knowledge of the symbolism of every nation. Thus it becomes comprehensible why Ilda-Baoth was regarded by most of them as the god of Moses, and was held as a proud, ambitious, and impure spirit, who had abused his power by usurping the place of the *highest God*, though he was no better, and in some respects far worse than *his brethren Elohim*; the latter representing the all-embracing, manifested deity only in their collectivity, since they were the fashioners of the first differentiations of the primary Cosmic substance for the creation of the phenomenal Universe. Therefore Jehovah was called by the Gnostics the Creator of, and one with Ophiomorphos, the Serpent, Satan, or *EVIL*. (*See* "*Isis Unveiled*," ii, 184). They taught that Iurbo and Adonai were "names of Jao-Jehovah, who is an emanation of Ilda Baoth" (*Codex Nazaraeus*). (. . .) This amounted in their language to saying what the Rabbins expressed in a more veiled way, by stating that—"Cain had been generated by Samael or Satan."

[…]

Our present quarrel is exclusively with theology. The Church enforces belief in a personal god and a personal devil, while Occultism shows the fallacy of such a belief. And though for the Pantheists and Occultists, as much as for the Pessimists, Nature is no better than "a comely mother, but stone cold"—this is true only so far as regards *external* physical nature. They both agree that, to the superficial observer, she is no better than an immense slaughter-house wherein butchers become victims, and victims executioners in their turn. It is quite natural that the pessimistically inclined profane, once convinced of Nature's numerous shortcomings and failures, and especially of her autophagous propensities, should imagine this to be the best evidence that there is no deity *in abscondito* within Nature, nor anything divine in her. Nor is it less natural that the materialist and the physicist should imagine that everything is due to blind force and chance, and to the survival of the *strongest*, even more often than of the *fittest.* But the Occultists, who regard physical nature as a bundle of most varied illusions on the plane of deceptive perceptions; who recognize in every pain and suffering but the necessary pangs of incessant procreation: a series of stages toward an ever-growing

perfectibility, which is visible in the silent influence of never-erring Karma, or *abstract* nature—the Occultists, we say, view the great Mother otherwise. Woe to those who live without suffering. Stagnation and death is the future of all that vegetates without a change. And how can there be any change for the better without proportionate suffering during the preceding stage? Is it not those only who have learnt the deceptive value of earthly hopes and the illusive allurements of external nature who are destined to solve the great problems of life, pain, and death?

If our modern philosophers—preceded by the medieval scholars—have helped themselves to more than one fundamental idea of antiquity, theologians have built their God and his Archangels, their Satan and his Angels, along with the Logos and his staff, entirely out of the *dramatis personae* of the old heathen Pantheons. They would have been welcome to these, had they not cunningly distorted the original characters, perverted the philosophical meaning, and taking advantage of the ignorance of Christendom—the result of long ages of mental sleep, during which humanity was permitted to think only by proxy—tossed every symbol into the most inextricable confusion. One of their most sinful achievements in this direction, was the transformation of the divine *alter ego* into the grotesque Satan of their theology.

As the whole philosophy of the problem of evil hangs upon the correct comprehension of the constitution of the *inner* being of nature and man, of the divine within the animal, and hence also the correctness of the whole system as given in these pages, with regard to the crown piece of evolution—Man—we cannot take sufficient precautions against theological subterfuges. When the good St. Augustine and the fiery Tertullian called the Devil "the monkey of God," this could be attributed to the ignorance of the age they lived in. It is more difficult to excuse our modern writers on the same ground. (. . .)

[…]

Nowhere is the metaphysical truth more clear, when explained esoterically, or more hidden from the average comprehension of those who instead of appreciating the sublimity of the idea can only degrade, than in the *Upanishads*, the esoteric glossaries of the Vedas. The Rig-Veda, as Guignault characterized it, "is the most sublime conception of the great highways of

Humanity." The Vedas are, and will remain for ever, in the esotericism of the Vedanta and the Upanishads, "the mirror of the eternal Wisdom."

For over sixteen centuries the new masks, forced on the faces of the old gods, have screened them from public curiosity, but they have finally proved a misfit. Yet the metaphorical Fall, and as metaphorical atonement and crucifixion, led Western Humanity through roads knee-deep in blood. Worse than all, they led it to believe in the dogma of the evil spirit distinct from the spirit of all good, whereas the former lives in all matter and pre-eminently in man. Finally it created the God-slandering dogma of Hell and eternal perdition; it spread a thick film between the higher intuitions of man and divine verities; and, most pernicious result of all, it made people remain ignorant of the fact that there were no fiends, no dark demons in the Universe before man's own appearance on this, and probably on other earths. Henceforth the people were led to accept, as the problematical consolation for this world's sorrows, the thought of original sin.

The philosophy of that law in Nature, which implants in man as well as in every beast a passionate, inherent, and instinctive desire for freedom and self-guidance, pertains to psychology and cannot be touched on now. To show the feeling in higher Intelligences, to analyze and give a natural reason for it, would necessitate, moreover, an endless philosophical explanation for which there is no room here. Perhaps, the best synthesis of this feeling is found in three lines of Milton's *Paradise Lost.* Says the "Fallen One":—

> "Here we may reign secure; and in my choice, To reign is worth ambition, though in hell! Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven. . . ."

Better be man, the crown of terrestrial production and king over its *opus operatum,* than be lost among the will-less spiritual Hosts in Heaven.

We have said elsewhere that the dogma of the first *Fall* rested on a few verses in *Revelation*; these verses being now shown a plagiarism from Enoch by some scholars. These grew into endless theories and speculations, which gradually acquired the importance of dogma and inspired tradition. (. . .)

The *princeps aeris hujus,* the "prince of the air" of St. Paul, is not the devil, but the effects of the astral light, as Eliphas Lévi correctly explains. The Devil is not "the God *of this period,*" as he says, for it is the deity of every age and period, since man appeared on earth, and matter, in its countless forms and states, had to fight for its evanescent existence against other disintegrating Forces.

The "Dragon" is simply the symbol of the cycle and of the "Sons of Manvantaric Eternity," who had descended on earth during a certain epoch of its formative period. The "clouds of smoke" are a geological phenomenon. The "third part of the stars of heaven" cast down to the earth—refers to the divine Monads, (the Spirits of the Stars in Astrology) that circumambulate our globe; *i.e.*, the *human* Egos destined to perform the whole cycle of incarnations. This sentence, *qui circumambulat terram*, however, is again referred to the Devil in theology, the mythical father of Evil being said to "fall like lightning." Unfortunately for this interpretation, the "Son of Man," or Christ, is expected, on the personal testimony of Jesus, to descend on earth likewise, "As the lightning cometh out of the East,"[57] just in the same shape and under the same symbol as Satan, who is seen "as lightning to fall from heaven."[58] All these metaphors and figures of speech, pre-eminently Oriental in their character, must have their origin searched for in the East. In all the ancient cosmogonies *light* comes from *darkness.* In Egypt, as elsewhere, *darkness* was "the principle of all things." Hence Pymander, the "Thought *divine*," issues as *light* from darkness.

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[1] The case of Eliphas Lévi could potentially complicate such a claim, depending on whether his positive interpretations of Satan are seen as primarily political or esoteric (and on how his discussions of Satan in his later, predominantly esoteric, works are read). See the chapter on Lévi in the present volume.

[2] Siv Ellen Kraft, "The Sex Problem: Political Aspects of Gender Discourse in the Theosophical Society, 1875–1930" (diss., University of Bergen, 1999) pp. 127–128.

[3] Håkan Lejon, *Historien om den antroposofiska humanismen. Den antroposofiska bild- ningsidén i idéhistoriskt perspektiv 1880–1980* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1997) p. 43; Eszter Szalczer, "Strindberg's Cosmic Theatre. Theosophical Impact and the Theatrical Metaphor" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 1997) pp. 48–56; Emily B. Sellon and Renée Weber, *The Sex Radicals: Free Love in Victorian America* (Lawrence: Regent Press of Kansas, 1977) pp. 326–327.

[4] James A. Santucci, "Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna," in *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, ed. Wouter J. Hanegraaff (Leiden: Brill, 2006) pp. 1120–1122; Bruce Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revived: A History of the Theosophical Movement* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1980) p. 128.

[5] Joy Dixon, *Divine Feminine: Theosophy and Feminism in England* (Baltimore, London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001) p. 150.

[6] The classic academic summary of Theosophical ideas is Campbell 1980. See also Olav Hammer and Mikael Rothstein, *Handbook of the Theosophical Current* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

[7] Santucci, "Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna," pp. 1118–1119.

[8] Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revived*, pp. 32–35, 40–41.

[9] Constance Wachtmeister, *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and the Secret Doctrine* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1893) p. 33.

[10] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Technology* (Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1877/1988) vol. 2, pp. 473–528.

[11] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, pp. 480, 500.

[12] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 1, p. 472.

[13] Olav Hammer, *Profeter mot strömmen. Essäer om mystiker, medier och magiker i vår tid* (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1999) pp. 226–227.

[14] Stephen Prothero, "From Spiritualism to Theosophy: 'Uplifting' a Democratic Tradition," *Religion and American Culture* 3:2 (1993) p. 210; Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revived*, pp. 97–100.

[15] Editor, "What's in a Name? Why the Magazine Is Called Lucifer," *Lucifer* 1:1 (1887) p. 6.

[16] Editor, "What's in a Name?," p. 2.

[17] Editor, What's in a Name?," p. 2.

[18] The best monograph on Romantic Satanism is Peter A. Schock, *Romantic Satanism: Myth and the Historical Moment in Blake, Shelley, and Byron* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

[19] Blavatsky, "Masons and Jesuits," *The Theosophist* 3:7 (1882) pp. 174–175.

[20] Boris de Zirkoff, *H. P. Blavatsky: Cumulative Index* (Madras, London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1991) pp. 145–146, 311, 484, 86–92, 109–110, 260–262.

[21] Cf. Per Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar. Satanism i äldre tid* (Sundbyberg: Ouroboros, 2006) pp. xiii–xvi, 108–117.

[22] See, e.g., Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, pp. 510–513.

[23] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 162.

[24] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 244.

[25] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 243.

[26] See, e.g., Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, pp. 389, 478, 513.

[27] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 1, p. 198.

[28] Recent years has seen an important debate regarding how appropriate the term "Gnosticism" in fact is as a label for these currents of thought. See, e.g., Michael Allen Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

[29] Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revived*, pp. 33–34, 37.

[30] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 243.

[31] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 386.

[32] This has been pointed out by several scholars, e.g., Mircea Eliade *Occultism, Witchcraft and Cultural Fashions* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 49; Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revived*, p. 25.

[33] See, e.g., Eliphas Lévi, *Histoire de la magie* (Paris: Germer Bailiérre, 1860) pp. 195–197; for a discussion, see Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar*, pp. 101–107.

[34] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 507.

[35] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 1, p. 73.

[36] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 389.

[37] Sellon and Weber, *The Sex Radicals*, p. 322.

[38] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 209.

[39] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 513.

[40] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 515.

[41] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 513.

[42] Charles J. Ryan, "Some Notes on The Secret Doctrine," *The Theosophical Forum* (March 1945).

[43] Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, p. 442.

[44] G. R. S. Mead, "Facts about *The Secret Doctrine*," *The Occult Review* (May 1927) pp. 319–324.

[45] H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, ed. Michael Gomes (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2009).

[46] Per Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism: Lucifer as the Liberator of Woman in Nineteenth-Century Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017) pp. 130–142.

[47] On Siitoin, see Granholm, 2009; on Gregorius, see Faxneld, 2006, 177–188.

[48] H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 2 (Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1888) pp. 243–247, 386–389, 475–476, 484–486.

[49] Footnote from original removed.

[50] Footnote from original removed.

[51] Footnote in original: See Numbers xxi. 8–9. God orders Moses to build a brazen Serpent "Saraph"; to *look upon which* heals those bitten by the *fiery serpents*. The latter were the *Seraphim*, each one of which, as Isaiah shows (vi. 2), "*had six wings*"; they are the symbols of Jehovah, and of all the other Demiurgi who produce out of themselves six sons or likenesses—Seven with their Creator. Thus, the Brazen Serpent *is* Jehovah, the chief of the "fiery serpents." And yet, in 2 Kings xviii., it is shown that King Hezekiah, who, like as David his father, "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord"—"brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made . . . and called it *Nehushtan*," or piece of brass.

[52] Footnote in original: And Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel (Chron. xxi. 1.) "The anger of the Lord Jehovah was kindled against Israel," and he moved David to say: "Go, number Israel" (2 Samuel, xxiv. 1). The two are then identical.

[53] Footnote from original removed.

[54] Footnote from original removed.

[55] Footnote from original removed.

[56] Footnote in original: In Demonology, Satan is the leader of the opposition in Hell, the monarch of which was Beelzebub. He belongs to the fifth kind or class of demons (of which there are nine according to mediaeval demonology), and he is at the head of witches and sorcerers. But see in the text the true meaning of Baphomet, the goat-headed Satan, one with Azaziel, the scape goat of Israel. Nature is the god *PAN*.

[57] Footnote in original: Matthew xxiv. 27.

[58] Footnote in original: Luke x. 18.

6

Léo Taxil, *Le Palladium régénéré et libre* (1895)

Ruben van Luijk

The present text might be among the most remarkable within this compilation. In 1895, a periodical called *Le Palladium régénéré et libre* (“The Free and Regenerated Palladium”) began publication in Paris. It purported to be the public voice of a faction of Luciferians who had recently seceded from the New Palladium, a secret esoteric organization operating within the inner circles of Freemasonry and devoted to the worship of the fallen angel. The term “Luciferian” was in this context no moot point, for the schismatic group presented by the magazine had broken off from the larger body of Palladism after the latter’s increasing Satanist tendencies had been ratified by its decision to address its deity henceforth as Satan instead of just Lucifer.

In order to uphold orthodox Luciferianism, a group of prominent Palladists had founded an Independent Palladist Convention. On “2 mékir 000894” (January 21, 1895, Vulgar Era), the convention had reached the decision to undertake “an attempt at public propaganda of the Luciferian principles”—for the time being only by way of experiment and for a period of a year.[1] As a first step, *Le Palladium régénéré et libre* had been set up, which was to serve both as a vehicle for evangelization and as a link between existing gatherings or “family groups” of independent Luciferians. Editor-in-charge was Miss Diana Vaughan, Grand Mistress of Independent Palladism, who mostly filled the pages of her periodical with articles in a strongly polemic vein directed against the “Adonaïtes” (as she was wont to style adherents of the Christian religion) or her former brethren of the Palladium proper.

The *Palladium régénéré et libre*, it may be best to disclose beforehand, was a hoax, an elaborate mystification crafted by master impostor Léo Taxil (pen name for Marie-Joseph-Antoine-Gabriel Jogand-Pagès, 1854–1907) in

order to discredit the Roman Catholic Church. Only three issues of the remarkable bulletin would appear. It was discontinued in June 1895, when Diana Vaughan announced her conversion to Christianity after she had had a vision of Joan of Arc. In 1897, Taxil disclosed at a spectacular press conference that both Vaughan and the Palladium had been his own creations and only existed on paper.

Léo Taxil was an unruly kid. Raised in an affluent Catholic family from Marseille, he published his first radical periodical when still a sixteen-year-old pupil at a Catholic lyceum. Later, he concentrated on lurid anticlerical propaganda, founding a publishing house specialized in this genre. On April 23, 1885, he suddenly announced his conversion to Roman Catholicism and began to publish equally lurid propaganda on the church's behalf. Gradually, Freemasonry became his most important target. The Roman Catholic Church had been waging an ever-fiercer antimasonic campaign during the nineteenth century, suspecting the Lodge to mastermind a diabolical plot against the church and to act as the secret motor behind secularization, political emancipation, and other aspects of modernization. Freemasons in France and other Latin countries, in their turn, generally favored curbing the influence of the church on political and social life and sometimes used the influence of the Brotherhood to support anticlerical politics—not for nothing, Masonry was often called the "Church of the Republic" in France.

This intense struggle over the position of Christianity in Western society formed the background of Taxil's mystification. In his Encyclical Letter *Humanum Genus* (1884), Pope Leo XIII had urged Catholic believers "to tear away the mask of Freemasonry, and let it be seen as it really is."[2] Taxil planned to expose the gullibility of Roman Catholicism by feeding it blatantly absurd antimasonic propaganda that he would later expose as fictive. To this purpose, he introduced the idea that the hidden core of Masonry consisted of veneration of the fallen angel and that this secret cult was organized by a secret intramasonic network called the New Palladium. Up to then, ideas about formal Lucifer-worship within Freemasonry has been limited to suggestive asides in Catholic antimasonic literature. Taxil succeeded in giving the notion wide currency. The existence of Palladism and of hidden Satanism within Freemasonry was officially accepted by the most important spokesmen of Catholic antimasonism on the International Masonic Congress that convened in Trent in 1896. It is not improbable, by the way, that Taxil's intentions with his mystification had been double-edged and that

he also wanted to target Freemasonry itself. Taxil had a personal history of conflict with the Craft and had been expulsed from a Masonic lodge just prior to his “conversion” to Roman Catholicism.

Le Palladium régénéré et libre (1895)

Origin

Taxil’s masterpiece during his twelve-year undercover operation as a Catholic agitator was without doubt the creation of Miss Diana Vaughan, Grand Mistress of Palladism and fiancée of the demon Asmodeus. She had been introduced to the public in *Le Diable au XIX^{e} siècle* (“The Devil in the Nineteenth Century”), a Vernesque travelogue on the secret conspiracy of Luciferian Freemasonry that had been penned by Taxil and a certain Karl or Charles Hacks (1851–1935) under the pseudonym Dr. Bataille.[3] Although Vaughan was introduced as a convinced Luciferian, she was portrayed in such positive terms that she was bound to appeal to (Catholic) readers. Taxil sent letters under her name to Catholic editors and ecclesiastical dignitaries and at one point arranged a meeting between a woman impersonating the Luciferian Grand Mistress and a venerable ultramontane notable. In 1895, he decided to give Vaughan her own voice and launch her own periodical.

The foundation of *Le Palladium régénéré et libre* was a story in itself. Taxil approached the minor but devoutly Catholic publisher Alfred Pierret with the request to publish the bulletin. When Pierret expressed his astonishment about the fact that a Catholic convert and strident antimasonist like Taxil was acting as a go-between for a group of antichristian Luciferians, the latter assured him that it was all part of a hidden master plan that would lead thousands of Luciferians into the fold of the church. Pierret declined, however, to accept a large sum of money in order to paint his bookshop flaming red and adorn it with golden triangles and other “Luciferian” symbols. As a result, the issues of *Palladium* were displayed in his shop windows between rosaries and Catholic books of devotion.

As already mentioned, only three issues of *Palladium* would appear, according to Pierret, in a print run of about two thousand, of which some eight hundred were still unsold when Taxil unmasked his own creation. After Miss Vaughan’s “conversion” to Roman Catholicism, the periodical was continued under the title *Mémoires d’une ex-Palladiste Parfaite Initiée,*

Indépendante (“Memoirs of an Independent and Completely Initiated Ex-Palladist”). Catholic interest in the converted Grand Mistress now reached a pitch of hysteria. Letters of support streamed into Pierret’s office, and Theresa de Lissieux, the future saint, made a small play to commemorate Miss Vaughan’s escape from the clutches of the demon.[4] The demands on Vaughan to show herself to the public also intensified. Taxil declared that the former Luciferian priestess had to remain in hiding because Masonic assassins were after her life, but in the end had to yield to public pressure and disclosed the non-existence of his character on the press conference that we already mentioned. After this dénouement, one more issue of the *Mémoires d’une ex-Palladiste* saw light, written by Alfred Pierret in an effort to clear his name and to explain how he had been duped by Taxil. This is one of our most important sources regarding the material genesis of the *Palladium régénéré et libre*.

Content

In content, the Palladium issues had a twofold character. In the first place, the magazine was purportedly meant as a “link” between Luciferian groups, an illusion that was carefully fostered by inserting small coded messages to the faithful and adorning its pages with strange esoteric symbols (duly explained to the public in later issues). Taxil also took the opportunity to pursue some of the many fictive or semi-fictive controversies that he had been raising in his other pseudo-antimasonic publications.

Primarily, however, the *Palladium régénéré et libre* was composed to appeal to a general readership. The excerpt included here, Miss Vaughan’s “editorial” from the first issue, already gives a good impression of its general contents. Overall, Taxil’s Luciferians neatly reversed Christian theology, with “Adonai” as the evil principle opposed by Lucifer, often designated as “Good-God” by the English Miss. This reversal was pressed ad absurdum in subsequent articles, where Vaughan talks about Luciferian saints, a Luciferian heaven, and a Luciferian Last Judgment, while other publications of the Taxil factory describe a Luciferian Bible, Luciferian exorcisms to cleanse Christian places of worship from “adonaite impreganation,” and Luciferian nuns abandoning themselves to mystical sex with Lucifer’s angels.[5] In contrast to traditional Christianity, however, Vaughan’s Luciferianism is a true dualism, with Lucifer and Adonai as two eternally

opposed independent principles. Lucifer is the representative of life, light, and intelligence, while Adonai is the deity of the material world and the bringer of death. The partition between "Satanists" and "Luciferians" that Taxil created within Palladist ranks will have served tactical objectives, providing another change to posit Miss Vaughan as a "good" Luciferian. But it may also have been intended as humorous mirror image of the Christian history of schism over sometimes seemingly ephermerical matters of nomenclature.

Taxil's sources of inspiration for all this must have been manifold. On the one hand, he was continuing classic themes and diabolizing trends from Catholic antimasonic and anti-occult publications that went back at least to the Abbé Augustin Barruel and his *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du jacobinisme* ("Memoirs for a History of Jacobinism," 1797). The success enjoyed by *Là-Bas* (1891), the "Satanist" novel by J.-K. Huysmans, certainly will have stimulated him to pursue the Luciferian trail further. On the other hand, Taxil may have found inspiration in genuine utterances from Romantic Satanism and esotericism. A fundamental distinction between Lucifer and Satan, for instance, had already been suggested on occasion by occultists like Éliphas Lévi and was greatly stressed in the Theosophy of H. P. Blavatsky.

Genre and Audience

The *Palladium régénéré et libre* was a spoof periodical containing theological exposés, faked internal communications, diatribes against "Satanist" Palladism, "autobiographical" accounts by Diana Vaughan, and commentary on recent developments with regard to Luciferianism. It was composed to be realistic enough to be believed by some, and absurd enough to render those believers ridiculous. Thus, its primary intention was to serve as a trap. Yet, some of the criticism expressed by Miss Vaughan will certainly have been shared by Taxil himself. Throughout the whole of his antimasonic corpus, it is often hard to determine where he is constructing his outrageous pseudo-Catholic smokescreen, where he is expressing sincere opinions of his own (whether through the mouth of his Luciferian creations or through the pen of his own Catholic alter egos), and where he is setting up a ploy within a ploy. The antisemitism that sometimes pops up on his pages may be a good example of this ambiguity. From early on, occasional anti-Jewish utterances appeared in his antimasonic publications. Yet on the whole, Taxil showed remarkable reluctance to exploit this popular theme, even

within the context of a disinformation campaign that he was later to expose as nothing but ridiculous nonsense anyway. In the end, however, Taxil seems to have given in to the demand from his Catholic readership for "something on the Jews." But even then, he grasped the occasion to concoct an anti-antisemitic scheme-within-a-scheme and tried to use his antisemitic texts to bait Édouard Drumont (1844–1917), the prima donna of French antisemitism, into his Palladist trap.

With regard to the editorial by Vaughan included here, the objections against a deity who allows his creatures to suffer and a clergy who only urges its flock to forbearance and prayer seems very much Taxil's own and could as well be derived from his own earlier anticlerical writings. Although Taxil himself was certainly no Luciferian, it may well be that the persona of Diana Vaughan allowed him to express his own inner convictions from time to time.

Ostensibly, Vaughan's periodical addressed "independent" Luciferians and potential sympathizers from among the larger populace. The audience that Taxil really intended to reach, however, was obviously French Catholicism. This was partly acknowledged on the pages of *Palladium* themselves: Diana Vaughan, for instance, declared she had sent sample copies of the first issue to all Catholic convents in France in a gesture of defiance and missionary zeal (apparently this was no empty boast, as Pierret later reports that these had all been returned). As a whole, the prime function of *Palladium* was to enhance the credibility of the Palladic edifice by constructing "independent" material corroboration of its existence. In addition, Taxil may have planned to use the periodical as a stage for the conversion of his false Grand Mistress. Ironically enough, however, the *Palladium régénéré et libre* managed to attract some from among its purported audience as well. Pierret recounts how a group of workers and a "former prefect" came by at his office to inquire about the possibility to join the Luciferian organization, while the French occultist Papus mentions a senator who had embraced Palladism.[6]

Reception and Influence

Although they remained controversial, Taxil's mystifications gained fairly wide credence among the Catholic public and in certain esoteric circles. In the Catholic press throughout Europe, lively polemics regarding the existence or non-existence of "Luciferian Grand Mistress" Diana Vaughan flared up. When Taxil blew the lid from his own contraption, mainstream Catholic

antimasonism silently dropped most of his fantasies. In some fringe segments of Catholic conspiracy culture, however, speculations about the actual fate of the elusive Miss and the reality of Palladism continue up to the present day.[7] Other pieces of disinformation created by Taxil sometimes reappear in publications by evangelical or Islamic fundamentalists.

One of the most persistent inventions of Taxil would prove to be the distinction between Luciferians and Satanists. Although, as we have seen, certain authors and groups within Western esotericism had already made a sharp distinction between Lucifer and Satan, there were certainly no factions of "Luciferians" and "Satanists" active at the time Taxil was writing. Even after he had discredited his impostures himself, however, the existence of rival factions of Luciferians and Satanists remained an accepted fact in many publications on Satanism. It was still occasionally referred to in academic textbooks as late as the 1970s.[8] Taxil's construct may also have inspired Ben Kadosh, the Danish dairyman and early Satanist (see separate chapter in the present volume) who declared himself a "Luciferian" during the Danish census of 1906.[9]

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Excerpt from Diana Vaughan (Leo Taxil), *Le Palladium régénéré et libre* (1895)

Translation from French: Cynthia Jones

Slander we will have.[10] No, it will not pass us by. The religion called catholic has accustomed the peoples of the world [to it]—who have been poisoned with its lie that whomever worships another god other than its own, worships a Satan.

We loathe the Roman Catholic god; we worship another, under the auspices of the Sacred Palladium. Roman Catholics say and will say again that we are Satanists.

Deception! We are not Satanists, we are Luciferians.

Roman Catholics: the most satanic, that's you. Nothing is easier to prove, indeed, most certainly.

I have known, I knew, a model household, a husband and wife who loved each other with all their heart, both born and raised in the accursed superstition, baptized by water, practicing Adonaism, in short, respectable Roman Catholics. The husband was a tireless worker; no reproach could be made to him; joy and happiness blossomed in the household.

One day, paralysis overcame him, the man could no longer work. For eight years, his wife devoted herself to him. Misery! Lack of bread! All the heartaches, all the endurance! She rose to the task, the valiant woman; and not only did she earn the household dough, she also earned her husband's remedies. Her courage and her love triumphed. By her labor, they had at home everything tneeded for the cure. The paralysis was vanquished. It had lasted eight years.

They had never ceased to attend the Adonaite church.

However, not even ten months later, when the man had at last gone back to work, suddenly again, a new illness descended upon him, incomprehensible, dreadful, even worse than the first. The unfortunate man became blind.

Justice! Is there are god, a sole god, who pleases himself by torturing the poor world? . . . But then it's a monster, this god!

They had committed no crime, those good people. They were, they are exemplary spouses. Imagine for yourself the joy after healing from paralysis, and then the despair, when ten months later, blindness manifests itself. It is atrocious, it cries out for vengeance against a divinity that oppresses innocent humanity on a whim.

The Adonaist priest dared to tell them: "bow down before the will of God; it is a new test; God strikes you in this world that is a valley of tears, so that you may have greater happiness when you are in heaven. Bless him, thank him for your suffering."

He had never been paralyzed, he was not blind, he had no family, the Adonaiste priest who said all that.

I have gotten to know these desolate people.

I also spoke to them

"Naïve friends" I said to them, "your god oppresses you and deceives you. Your hardship is another proof that a single god is an impossibility. Do you not understand that there exists a barbaric god? Alas, you are not the only

ones upon whom unexpected and unmerited plagues swoop down. There is a supreme being that is cruel, this cannot be denied. But, fon the other hand, there are divine kindnesses to be noted, kindnesses that delight humans, that make life good. The evil and the good, can they come from the same god? The supreme being, can he be alternately, on a whim, nice and mean, friend and foe to humanity? No, because this would be an insane god. Dig down within your soul, and you will say with me that a god, whatever it be, should not suffer bouts of insanity. The truth is that the supreme being comprises two principles: there is a good god and an evil god. The evil one is the Most High of Pride who will trick you by claiming divine oneness, and who persecutes you, who tortures you. Cursed be he! This is Adonai, this is the god of superstition, the Roman Catholic god. The other, who else could it be than the defamed one, the one who has been made out to be the devil, but whom, while slandering him with the name of Satan, one has been unable to rob from his real name, his name that means light, that is to say, beauty, truth, goodness. Lucifer? Yes, friends, Lucifer is god, he fights to wrest humanity from Adonai's wrongdoing, yes, Lucifer is the Good Lord. He is the one to whom you should pray, he is the one who will heal you."

This story is not singular: There are thousands, millions, billions. How many who are beyond reproach are hit with blows just as unjust as cruel!

They have heard me, they have understood me. The husband and the wife have renounced Adonai; they are good Luciferians today. Lucifer fights for them. The blind will regain his vision; The Good-God will heal him.

Hence, we are luciferians; we are not Satanists. Satan, that's the devil, the spirit of evil, the supreme barbarian, he who plays with the well-being of humans. He insults to cause pain, he mocks us by having his priests say that all of his persecutions will garner his victims a better future—the more one suffers, the better. The real cruelty is his tyranny and malice. Let us imprecate against him, and Lucifer will protect us!

However, the bad faith of Adonaism is such that they will persist in calling us Satanists; we know that.

It does not matter! The calumny scarcely troubles us; we scorn it.

Oh God of kindness, oh Father the most beloved of all fathers, oh Lucifer supreme and most high, great and most great, allmighty and even mightier, we bow down before your divine majesty. From the depths of my soul, I cry out to you: Yours I am, my Lord, I am yours, all yours! May Adonai be shouted down! We reject him, we loath him; and may those, baptized by

water, renounce him! Illuminate, illuminate, Holiest of holies, Torch that carries the light, Origin of the worlds of Life, blessed Knowledge, illuminate, illuminate, oh Lucifer Good-Lord.

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[1] *Le Palladium régénéré et libre: Lien des groupes luciférien indépendants* 1:1 (1 Pharmuthi 000895/March 21, 1895) (and subsequent issues), back cover text.

[2] Pope Leo XIII, *Humanum Genus*, section 31, retrieved from www.vatican.va; Latin text in *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, vol. 16, pp. 417–433.

[3] Docteur Bataille, *Le Diable au XIXe siècle: La Franc-Maçonnerie luciférienne ou les mystères du spiritisme. Révélations complètes sur le Palladisme, la théurgie, la goétie et tout le satanisme moderne. Récits d'un témoin*, 2 vols. (Paris: Delhomme & Briguet, [1892–1893]) vol. 1, pp. 708–722.

[4] The play, entitled "Le Triomphe de l'Humilité," can be found in Sainte Thérèse de L'Enfant-Jésus et de la Sainte-Face, *Œuvres complètes (Textes et derniers paroles)* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf/Desclée De Brouwer, 2004) pp. 915–927.

[5] *Palladium régénéré et libre* 1:1 (1895) pp. 11–13; Bataille, *Le Diable au XIXe siècle*, pp. 2:889, 1:492, 1:772–726.

[6] Letter by Papus quoted in Q. V., "Le Diable au XIXme Siècle," *Light* 16 (May 16, 1896) 801, pp. 231–232, there p. 231.

[7] Massimo Introvigne, **"**Diana Redux: retour sur l'affaire Léo Taxil—Diana Vaughan," *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism* 4:1 (2004) pp. 91–97.

[8] Marcello Truzzi, "Towards a Sociology of the Occult: Notes on Modern Witchcraft," in *Religious Movements in Contemporary America*, ed. Irving I. Zaretsky and Mark P. Leone (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974) pp. 628–645, there 639, who distinguishes "Non-Stereotypical Satanists (Palladists or Luciferians)," a group that includes "Baphometists" and LaVeyan Satanists. Elsewhere in this article (p. 635), Truzzi elucidates: "This form of Satanism has sometimes been called Palladism or Lucifierianism [*sic*] to distinguish it from the Christian variety," indicating as his source an old encyclopedia from 1908.

[9] Per Faxneld, "The Strange Case of Ben Kadosh: A Luciferian Pamphlet from 1906 and Its Current Renaissance," *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism* 11:1 (2011) pp. 1–22.

[10] *Le Palladium régénéré et libre* 1 (March 21, 1895), text on back cover.

7

Stanislaw Przybyzewski, *Die Synagoge des Satan* (1897)

Per Faxneld

Stanislaw Przybyszewski (1868–1927) was a highly influential figure in the avant garde artistic milieu of turn of-the-century Europe. His reknown stems mostly from his efforts as a prose writer, art critic, and network builder among Scandinavian, German, and eastern European (primarily Polish and Czech) artistic circles.[1] Przybyszewski was born in Łojewo, at the time part of the North German Confederation and later integrated into the Polish state. In 1889, he moved to Berlin to study architecture and medicine. He also briefly acted as editor of a Polish-language socialist journal there, which led to his expulsion from the university in 1893.[2] Having already started to frequent Berlin's bohemian circles, Przybyszewski now turned his attention fully to writing essays, art criticism, prose poems, short stories, and novels, all in German, during this period. Most of his work could be classified as belonging to the Decadent current in literature.

Like many other Decadents, Przybyszewski seemingly strived to be as provocative as possible, treating topics like incest, madness, and nihilist-anarchist terrorism. Another favorite topic of his was Satanism. He was perhaps the earliest person ever to openly self-define as a Satanist, develop a system of thought centered around a positive interpretation of Satan as its root metaphor, and then consistently propagate this ideology for decades in a plethora of different texts.[3] This certainly, as he fully intended, contributed to his notoriety.

Przybyszewski's own strongly bohemian life was also quite scandalous. He lived for several years with a woman, Martha Foerder, who bore him three children, one of them after he had left her and married the Norwegian

Dagny Juel in 1893. In 1898, he was arrested on suspicion of having murdered Foerder, but was released after it was concluded that the cause of death was in fact suicide through carbon monoxide poisoning. Przybyszewski callously sent the three children off to different orphanages, after which it seems he took no more interest in them. After Dagny's death in 1901, he treated their two children almost as irresponsibly, getting rid of them as soon as he could.

This was fully in line with his cultivation of a demonic persona, and he often did his best to come across as "wicked." One friend later recalled: "If we were to tell him . . . that he was a pederast, a consumptive, a drunk and a thief all in one, he would be very flattered indeed."[4] Yet, he was not always as uncaring as in the case of his children. An anecdote told by the same friend recounts a chance meeting with a destitute worker on the street. After hearing about the man's difficult situation, Przybyszewski proceeded to give him not only all the money he had on him, but also his pocket watch. His friend commented on this with the words "this Satanist had a heart as weak as wax, and sensitive to human misery" (though apparently not so sensitive to that of children).[5]

In Berlin, Przybyszewski frequented the tavern nicknamed Zum schwarzen Ferkel and became friends with artists and authors like Norwegian painter Edvard Munch (1863–1944), and Swedish playwright and author August Strindberg (1849–1912). He wrote in many of the most prestigious artistic journals of his time (e.g., *Die Fackel*, *Freie Bühne*), and was one of the co-founders of the famed German art periodical *Pan* (1895–1900). On his return to Poland in 1898, he edited *Zycie* ("Life," 1898–1900), the influential organ of the so-called Young Poland movement. Throughout this period, he was actively spreading Satanist ideology by peppering his various texts with it. Przybyszewski subsequently spent several years in Munich, later returning to Poland after it was properly (re-)established as a nation-state following World War I. At this point, the former *provocateur* had surprisingly become a national hero. Following a meager period as a translator and antiquarian bookseller, he obtained a modest post within the presidential administration. Many years of alcoholism had taken their toll on him, and in 1927 he passed away at age fifty-nine. The once controversial Decadent was given a full state funeral.

Die Synagoge des Satan (1897)

Origin

The text first appeared in two parts in the art and literature journal *Die Kritik* in 1897, and later that year as a small book (sixty-four pages) issued by the same journal's publishing house (Kritik-Verlag) under the full title *Die Synagoge des Satan: Ihre Entstehung, Einrichtung und jetzige Bedeutung: Ein Versuch* ("The Synagogue of Satan: Its Emergence, Establishment, and Current Significance: An Essay"). The print run of the edition is unknown, but it was probably fairly limited.

There are two main philosophical sources of inspiration for the text: Nietzsche's ideas about the superman, and Schopenhauer's pessimist philosophy. It further owes an obvious debt to the glorification of Lucifer by Romantics like Shelley at the previous turn of the century, but this is likely indirect. Przybyszwski's ideas about the cult of Satan, especially in its contemporary forms, are on the other hand clearly colored by the famous (and supposedly documentary) depictions in the novel *Là-bas* (1891) by Decadent French author J.-K. Huysmans.[6]

Another source of dubious veracity that he uses is Léo Taxil (see the chapter on Taxil in the present volume). Though clearly aware that Taxil was a practical joker, Przybyszewski insists on the veracity of the French journalist's division of modern adherents of the Devil into Palladists (neo-Gnostics to whom Lucifer is the principle of good) and Satanists (who worship evil and have leaders with "strange magical abilities"). In a way, this may have influenced his own somewhat muddled conception of Satan as a symbol of philosophy, critical thinking, and science on the one hand, and orgiastic sexuality, willful destruction, lustful murder, and ecstatic evil on the other.

Many parts of Przybyszewski's Satanism are not drastically different from conceptions of Satan as a positive figure that were in wide circulation throughout Europe at the time. The Devil as the originator of art and a patron of intellectual activity and progress in technology can be found, for example, in French historian Jules Michelet's *La Sorcière* (see the chapter on Michelet in the present volume). Parallels can also be drawn to Nobel Prize winner Giosuè Carducci's (1835–1907) scandalous poem *Inno a Satana* (*Hymn to Satan,* 1865), in which Satan symbolizes free thought, scientific

advancement, and modernity. As seen in the present volume, the enormously influential esotericist H. P. Blavatsky (1831–1891), chief ideologist of the Theosophical Society, also expressed considerable sympathy for the Devil. In her gargantuan two-volume work *The Secret Doctrine* (1888, vol. 2, p. 162) she calls him "the spirit of Intellectual Enlightenment and Freedom of Thought." In spite of the overlaps between Przybyszewski's opinions concerning Satan and hers, the Pole explicitly rejected Blavatsky's brand of esotericism and considered her a charlatan.

As Johan Nilsson points out in his discussion of C. W. Hansen's *Den ny morgens gry* (in the present volume), the general sexualization of Devil imagery facilitated the connecting of Satanism with phallicism. The basic notion in phallicist interpretations of religious phenomena is that the male genital organ (or possibly both the male and the female sex organs) is worshipped as a symbol of the principle of generation. Since reductionist explanations of religion were at their high point, several mythographers even suggested phallus worship—albeit often subsequently suppressed or forgotten—was the core of *all* religion (in the same manner other scholars of the period claimed that sun worship was the ultimate essence of every religion). Though the idea in itself had its roots in works by eighteenth-century figures like Richard Payne Knight (1751–1824), the Victorian obsession with sexuality again made this notion an object of considerable fascination. Occultists in particular were captivated by such speculations, with for example the Freemason and Rosicrucian Hargrave Jennings (1817–1890) contributing significantly to them.[7]

Przybyszewski's diabolology can be seen as a further example of this. His general celebration of what Nietzsche would have called the Dionysian principle—that is, sexuality, ecstasy, and madness—fits like hand in glove with it, since the Greco-Roman god Dionysus was honored with processions where a phallus played a prominent role. Przbyszewski's Dionysian Satan is fully consistent with the phallicist emphasis on fecundity and proliferation. This is obvious from his characterization of him as "the father of life, reproduction, progression, and the eternal return" (vol. 6, p. 73), and Satan is moreover stated to have an enormous penis. This penis is not quite conventional, however—a fact that will be discussed further below.

The Dionysian lauding of freedom and transgression also finds an expression in Przybszewski's connecting of Satanism with anarchism. The devil as an anarchist symbol had already been established by revolutionaries

like Mikhail Bakunin (1814–1876) and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865). Both these founding fathers of anarchism celebrated the Devil as a positive symbol of rebellion in works from the 1850s and 1870s. Toward the end of the century, this trope was, in fact, rather common among radical leftists, and was employed on a large scale by for example Swedish socialists.[8] Przybyszewski was thus, again, very much writing in accordance with a preexisting tradition. As we will see, there are, however, other points where he differs from the commonly seen Satanic discourse of the time.

Content

Die Synagoge des Satan is a fairly short book (sixty-four pages in the first published version), structured as an encapsulation of the history of the veneration of Satan. Most of it deals with medieval or early modern phenomena. Przybyszewski begins with postulating two eternal entities, Satan and God. The former is described as a lawless, constantly curious, defiant figure who represents both the "highest depravity" and the "highest wisdom." His creation is the physical world, rife with pain and doubt. Moreover, he is the father of science, philosophy, and art. God, by contrast, wants his followers to give up their free will, and is the creator of the perfect, spiritual world where there is no pain or contention (and hence no progression, development, or liberty). It becomes quite clear from the outset that the author's sympathy lies with Satan and his imperfect realm, the fount from which all creativity springs. Chapter one ends with a long monologue by Satan, where he attacks God for making his followers crawl like worms before him.

As mentioned, Satan is styled as the inspirer of scientists, anarchists, and even highly specific things like Nietzsche's *Umwertung aller Werte* ("revaluation of all values," a term first employed by the German philosopher in 1886). To Przybyszewski, Satan represents evolution, which Przybyszewski calls "the only law of existence,"[9] and this comes across as the highest good in the book. Echoing some of the harsher passages in Nietzsche's work, a strongly elitist, social-Darwinist ethos is also prominent. The Christian church is blamed for protecting "disease, the cripple and the castrated," and ultimately wanting to castrate everyone. While "Christ made his doctrine accessible to the plebeians," the Satanic teaching was only intended for an elite—the strong and proud. Satan himself, accordingly, is

painted as a ‘dark aristocrat.’ ”[10] However, Przybyszewski is also inspired by Michelet, claiming that Satan was the god of the “poor, the saddened, the despised” during the Middle Ages. In this capacity, he helped them to avenge themselves on the cruel nobles who treated them like cattle.[11]

Much space[12] is devoted to detailing Przybyszewski’s at times idiosyncratic impressions of dualist heresies like the Bogomils and Cathars. Historical accuracy was hardly the goal of text, though, but painting a colorful, bizarre picture of extreme episodes in history was—and in this Przybyszewski was no doubt successful. Aside from heretics, Przybyszewski is also particularly fascinated with witches, to whom he ascribes various peculiar powers. His description of the historical witch is ambivalent. She is linked to the Satan Przybyszewski idealizes, but is also for example said to feel satisfaction only when she “rummages around in the intestines of a murdered child.” In the final chapter, the code of the witches is described as including injunctions to hate your parents, kill people (especially children), commit sexual transgressions, lie, steal, and so on. He also describes Satanism as “the religion of hate, revenge and fornication.” Perhaps all this is to be understood in relation to Przybyszewski’s notion of evil and destruction as prerequisites for evolution and creativity. It could also, at least regarding some parts, be taken figuratively, as there are constant shifts between allegory and historical reality in the text. Less generously, it could be read as a sign of deep incoherence in the text, where the author lets himself get carried away by the Gothic *frisson* of the sinister Satan from traditional witchcraft narratives, while elsewhere expressing sympathy for a rather different benevolent and liberating Devil.

Woman has a very special role to play in Satanism, according to Przybyszewski. She has always been Satan’s tool for the “popularization and upholding of his cult.”[13] Satan himself was at first a female deity, and he still has breasts “hanging down over his belly like two sacks of flour.”[14] The idea of Satan having breasts is familiar from Christian iconography, from decks of tarot cards, and from the famous engraving of the Devil-figure Baphomet by Eliphas Lévi. A more original hermaphroditical trait is found in Przybyszewski’s assertion that the gigantic penis of the fallen angel has a vulva as its tip, an idea previously unheard of in demonological lore.[15]

Przybyszewski briefly details the claims about black masses among the members of the court of Louis XIV, and then moves to hail J.-K. Huysmans

novel *Là-bas* (1891) as both an artistic triumph and an important document of contemporary Satanism. In connection to this, hysteria and somnambulism are offered as explanatory models for Satanism. Additionally, in a peculiarly moralistic-sounding passage, Przybszewski blames the growth in his own time of Satanic groups (unsubstantiated, and viewed as non-existent by today's scholarship) on the "atheistic liberal state and the liberal church," tainted by a yielding to Darwinism.

The evolution of the witches' Sabbath is sketched as one where blasphemy of the Catholic Church eventually gave way to orgiastic gratification as the primary function. Eventually, the cult ended up being centered on a form of phallic worship (though we should remember Satan's phallus also encompasses a female sex organ). In his stressing of sexuality as the *Urgrund* of all things, Przybyszewski anticipates Freud, and it has even been suggested the latter may have been influenced by him.[16] Przybyszewski describes how wild dancing induced orgasms in the participants, and narcotic poisons, hysteria, and epilieptic conditions were also part of the picture. True to his academic background in medicine, Przybyszewski employs technical terms like "somatic" and "muscular activity" when discussing the physical sensations experienced at the Sabbath, and the framing of the activities as "hysterical" is fully in tune with the medical literature of the Charcot school on the topic.

Przybyszewski is very much part of his time in his stressing of a "scientific" understanding of "supernatural" phenomena, arguing for example that Sir William Crookes (1832–1919) has proved the reality of spiritualist mediumship, which lends support to early modern claims about witches. Crookes was a respected scientist and inventor, who developed an interest in Spiritualism toward the end of the 1860s. Later a member of the Theosophical Society and an initiate of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, he was president of the Society for Psychical research (SPR) from 1896 to 1899 and endorsed the paranormal powers of several mediums of questionable reputation. The SPR laid claim to being scientific and often exposed fraudulent mediums, but many of its leading members also seem to have held hopes that they would be able to prove the reality of various "psychic phenomena." As in the case of many SPR members, Przybybyszewski's overall bias must be said to be "occultist," in the sense of this term as defined by Wouter Hanegraaff: esoteric currents transformed by their encounter with secularism and modernity's rapid advances in the natural

sciences.[17] Other texts by Przybyszewski also clearly display his allegiance to this type of "secularized esotericism," with claims that magic and science are beginning to merge and many of the old supposedly supernatural phenomena will be integrated into a more advanced natural science currently developing. All this is standard rhetoric among turn-of-the-century esotericists.

Genre and Audience

What Przybyzewski's exact intentions with the text were is difficult to say. In one way, it could be read as a sensationalist potboiler compiling various bits and pieces on the history of Satanism gleaned from other authors. On the other hand, it often veers into a territory that is both quite creative, poetically accomplished, and, most significantly, didactic in a manner suggesting Przybyszewski was trying to impose an earnestly held Satanic worldview on his readers. The latter point is given additional plausibility by said worldview's presence in a long series of works by Przybyszewski, from novels to art-critical essays. Nowhere else in his oeuvre, however, is Satanism the explicit primary theme (even if he manages to introduce long passages of similar pro-Satanic exposition in the most unlikely places). In some sense, then, this should be considered his central proselytizing text, and probably the first non-fiction work ever having as a main purpose the propagating of Satanism.

The book appears to be meant for (decently well-educated) general readers, since it requires no particular specialist knowledge to (more or less) understand. Esotericism in a traditional sense plays a fairly limited role. It mostly appears when Przybyszewski is contemptuously dismissing its contemporary manifestations or praising the insightful magicians of yore. In accordance with what I have highlighted above, however, there are instances where Przybyszewski draws on the occult rhetoric of his time for legitimacy, and much of his reasoning fits well with arguments familiar from such a context. As for its genre, the book is perhaps most similar to Jules Michelet's *La Sorcière*: nominally a detached historical monograph, but in reality a peculiar hybrid of lightweight scholarship, prose poem, and radical ideological musings. Unlike Michelet, however, Przybyszewski also openly described himself as a Satanist and presented pro-Satanic ideas in a great number of texts.

Reception and Influence

At the height of his career, Przybyszewski was an extremely important cultural figure in Europe. Not only did his own work penetrate into many key artistic networks, but he was also portrayed in several works of fiction. His Satanism (as expressed in *Die Synagoge des Satan* and other works) and occult interests were often of central importance in such portrayals, for example in Strindberg's semi-autobiographical novel *Inferno* (1897). In spite of a life-long commitment to esoteric matters, Przybyszewski never joined or founded any esoteric group. Generally, he was quite dismissive of groups like the Theosophical Society and turn-of-the-century Rosicrucians.

Upon its publication, *Die Synagoge des Satan* definitely exerted an immediate influence in the artistic milieu where Przybyzewski moved around the time he wrote it. After coming under the influence of Przybyszewski, the Polish painter Wojciech Weiss (1875–1950) wrote in a letter to his parents: "*La Bohême*, Baudelaireanism, Satanism, woman as Satan, the woman of Rops. Goya. I've started to make etchings. One has to speak in this way, to propagate Satanism among the crowd."[18] Having returned to Poland in 1898, Przybyszewski gathered a group of young avant-gardists around him, who proudly took the name "Satans Kinder" after one of his novels. From the 1910s onward (until at least 1925), horror author and poet Hanns Heinz Ewers (1871–1943) held wildly popular lectures with the title *Die Religion des Satan* ("The Religion of Satan"), based almost verbatim on *Die Synagoge des Satan*.[19] In the 1920s, certain Satanic ideas in the German esoteric order Fraternitas Saturni were likely inspired by Przybyszewski's ideas.[20] Thus, his Satanic system decidedly had a significant impact in the decades following its publication.

It is quite striking how Przybyszewski's ideas anticipated those in much later forms of Satanism, and in some ways strongly differed from most pro-Satanic texts that were in circulation in his own day. The latter would typically have a strongly egalitarian and often more or less socialist ethos (Michelet, Shelley), or focus much more strongly on esoteric interpretations (like Blavatsky or Hansen did). The semi-atheist, social Darwinist, meritocratic-elitist Satanism of Przybyszewski is instead much closer to the ideology we can find in an author like Anton LaVey in the 1960s. While Przybyszewski's Satanism was thus out of step with his time (or, more precisely, ahead of it) to an extent, it also perpetuated some widespread

tropes, as we have seen. This combination (equal measures of conformity with established Satanic discourse, and innovative idiosyncrasy) assured a readership for the text both in its own time and later on. The fervid and floral writing style is also likely to have attracted an audience taking a primarily aesthetic pleasure in it.

New editions of *Die Synagoge des Satan* have been published for example in its original German (1979, 1984, 1995, 2000, the latter three editions as *Die Gnosis des Bösen*, "The Gnosis of Evil"), Polish (1902, 1993, 1995, 1999/2000, 2009, 2010), and English (2002, 2013, 2018), attesting to its continued popularity. The first English-language edition was published by an imprint owned by Stephen Flowers, a leading member of the Temple of Set (see the chapter on the Temple of Set in the present volume). With at least twelve editions worldwide, *Die Synagoge des Satan* can be seen as a key Satanic text, and its author can potentially, as argued above, be viewed as the first example of a consistent Satanist.

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Translation from German: Petter Spjut

There are two Gods in eternal opposition: two Originators, two Lords without beginning and end.[21]

The good God created the spirits, the pure beings; his world, which is the realm of the invisible, the world of completion, knows neither struggle, nor pain.

The evil God created the visible, the corporeal and the transitory. He made the flesh and the passions, the earth with its struggles, its distress and desperation, the immeasurable valley of tears; he made nature, which produces only pain, desperation and evil.

The good God—that is the norm, the law, humility and resignation. He says to his children: Be poor in spirit, only then will you find your way into my Kingdom. Be more childlike than the children, eradicate your volition, follow me! Do not seek an origin or an aim, for it is only with me that will you find the past and the future.

The evil god—that is lawlessness, the defiant and visionary leap into the future. He is the wish to uncover the deepest secrets, and he is the defiance of

titanic proportions, the defiance that unrestrained dispatches all laws, all norms. He is the highest wisdom and depravity, the wildest pride and the most devious humbleness, since it is the only way to overthrow rules. He has sanctified pride, recklessness and lust for power, and all of these things he calls heroism; he has taught humanity that there is no crime except to act against one's own nature. He has made curiosity holy and called it science; he allowed humanity to search for its own origins and he called that philosophy, and boundless as he was, he let loose all instincts in the marital bed and called it art.

The evil God was good, a good father and a benevolent guide:

"So you are ill and wish to be healed? Look! My earth is abundant with all kinds of herbs that can cure you, it is lavish with dangerous poisons, but you can force them to serve you as a remedy.

So you wish to get rich—you are searching for hidden treasures? Oh, I have a thousand means that you can use to lure your soul from its hiding place and make it reveal the precious veins of the earth. Your soul knows everything; it has the same primal origins as I.

So you wish to look into the future and tell your fortunes? Go, study the flight of the birds, listen to the sound of the leaves, glance at the stars, look into the crystal ball, decipher the lines in your hand—in a thousand forms I have shaped your future in advance, so study, seek and decipher, because my commandment is acuteness and craftiness, prudence, farsightedness and creative curiosity.

So you wish to destroy an enemy without being reached by the law? Go! Learn how to separate your soul from your body and I will carry it a thousand miles, so that you, being invisible, will be able to satisfy your heart's desire.

So you have lost your wife to death? I have compassion with your love, since that kind of love, the procreative love, is close to my heart. Go! I have a thousand means, a thousand ways, to snatch your beloved from death.

I promise you everything. If you walk my path, you shall behold and receive everything. But my path is a hard one, as any road to perfection is difficult."

Thus spoke the evil God, the Bringer of light and the Paraclete of Satan, before his great enemy, the youth from Galilee, was born. And many walked his path, and, during years of trials and tribulations, they discovered the secrets of the sky and the earth. They turned all things around, so that poison became a remedy, water showed them the future and the volcanic vapor that

poured out of the earth revealed to them the most secret essence of things. And further and further, they advanced on the path of vision: A circle that they drew around themselves, a number of vowels that they successively spoke, one after another, a prayer, a movement of a hand—all of these things were enough to establish a connection between their soul and the whole universe, to revoke all laws of space and time and to boundlessly behold the interconnections between cause and effect from the beginning of everything to the most distant future.

Yet was Satan-Antichrist to be born to that time.

The evil God was twofold.

Satan-Father, Satan-Samyâsa, Satan, the poet and philosopher, existed in the pride, almighty and all-knowing lineage of the magicians. He lived in the secluded mysteries of the Chaldean temples, and his priests were the Hakamim (the physicians), the Khartumim (the magicians, the Kasdim and Gazrim (the astrologists). This Satan lived in the doctrines of Mazdeism, and his children, the magicians, the Great ones, guarded the holy fire that came to them from heaven, and, from Ahura-Mazda, the good God, Zarathustra learned the secrets of the Soma plant. The Egyptian God Thot transmitted the secret knowledge to Trismegistes in forty-two books and taught his chosen ones about the parts of the body, and the dreadful Hecate imparted to her chosen ones the gift of magic vision and effect, and, above all, the gift of imperceptible murder.

But Satan-Satyr, Satan-Pan and Satan-Phallus also lived on earth, alongside with Satan-Thot and Satan-Hekate. He was the God of the instincts and the fleshly desire, honored with equal measure by the highest and the lowest in spirit; he was the inexhaustible source for passion, exaltation and ecstasy. The female he taught the art of seduction, an art that allowed humanity to satisfy their desires in a passion that extended to both sexes; he took delight in colors, invented the flute and placed the muscles in a rhythmic motion, until the *holy* mania embraced the hearts and the *holy* phallus inseminated the fertile womb with its abundance.

Pan was Apollo and Aphrodite at the same time. He was the God of the hearth and home as well as the God of the brothel. He had written down the philosophical systems, built museums and wonderful temples, learnt medicine and mathematic, at the same time as he had his temple in Arstarteion, which was an enormous brothel, a place where the Priestesses spent years of practices to master all possible means for sexual satisfaction.

During this time, around the time of the Emperor Tiberius, when the time for the Gods' great migration to Rome began, a time of highest sophistication and aristocratic indulgence, the "good" God, who until now had dwelt in his invisible kingdom in a state of privileged idleness, decided that the amount of sins had gone out of control, and he sent his son to the earth, so that he would be able to impart the gloomy truth of the invisible kingdom to the offspring of the "evil" God.

In a desolate struggle, the Church tears apart the veins through which the blood of the earth flows into humanity. It destroys the natural selection, which outwardly manifests itself in beauty, power and glory, it protects everything from which nature seeks to purge itself, everything against which it so forcefully turns itself: the filth, the ugliness, the disease, the crippled and the castrated. Most of all, the church would have liked to castrate everyone, to extinguish the light, to let the whole world be consumed by a rain of brimstone, and its only longing, its most flaming desire, was the fierce wish that the promised judgement day would finally arrive!

But the nerve, the vein, was not easily destroyed. Particularly the people, the earthborn ones, rooted themselves firmly in the ground and seized every opportunity to return to the beloved Gods of the earth. In the most bloodthirsty laws, the Christians directed their rabid rage against the pagans, but the demon—that is, earth, nature—was imperishable. He walked around in the woods, hid himself in remote caves, gathered his faithful ones together and celebrated the wild rites of Bacchus.

But most severe was the fanatic, rabid rage that they directed against the magicians and physicians of Satan. Be poor in spirit, obedient, imitate, do not think! That was the foremost law of the religion for the feeble-minded mob. But the magician was proud and defied all laws. Against the law of gravitation he elevated himself in the air and did not sink in the water. If he wanted to, he could be thrown into the fire and walk out of it without a scratch. The magician was too proud to imitate: if he only wanted, he could be just as good a God as Christ. "Christ was not able to do more than I, I can also make myself divine through virtue," Theodorus from Mopsuesta said. The magician despised poverty in spirit, since he revealed all secrets and solved all riddles. From the stars he was able to tell the successors of the emperor and he knew the future of all people. The magician was what also Christ had been: the defiant breaker of all laws, the wise visionary; he was God, but the magician was prouder than Christ had been. Christ adapted his

teachings to the mob. He made farmers and servants his partners in crime against the old covenant, people who were more childlike than children. The magician only planted his teachings in the souls of the most pride and mighty.

I am the God of light! Evil God of vengeance, you have overthrown me, because I was light. Your envy of my beauty, my glory and my light was greater than my power, but now you shall fear me, fear my pride and my hatred against the mighty one! I, the eternal light, do not sleep and neither do my children, whom I have nurtured with eternal light. But your children, who hate the light, who fear the light, your children, who crawl before your feet in despicable slavery, your children, tired from the struggle with me—they must sleep. See! I am the ruler among rulers, I associate with them, I dance with them—you are a dark tyrant among crawling worms.

In sad resignation, the Cathars reached the conclusion that matter is evil, that everything that emerges through the process of development and everything that receives its essence through procreation and reproduction belongs to the Lord of darkness.

The people shared this opinion completely. The church itself had, in its hate against instinct and nature, associated the world with Satan, and the people did not understand anything of the sophistry, through which the church sought to save the moral freedom.

For the people, all of the ideas about evil as simply the negation, all the sophistries about sin and the reason for its emergence, came across as strange – it was all private matters, over which the Church Fathers racketed their brains. For the people, as well as in the Christian praxis in general, a fully developed dualism between the mundane and the celestial existed. That was the evil as such, this was the good.

And no one cared to know whether evil was something that had come to emerge, or if it had existed as a second eternal principle from the beginning.

The medieval period does not know anything about God. It is first during the middle of the thirteenth century that he shows up in works of art, modest at the side of his son, the son that the people had left to the theologians. The whole medieval period only knows one religion, one fear and hope: Satan.

Evil demons flow around man from every direction, “as when someone is descended into the Ocean and wholly surrounded by water.” From time to time, they swarm around him “like a thick vault, so that there is no room for any air pocket between them.” “The amount of devils is as great as the atoms

of the sun, in every fold of life, a demon hides itself. There is neither a time, nor place, where man is safe from them."

He is the only true and sole ruler of the earth and the people, he is no servant, no "monkey" of God, as Irenaeus spitefully refers to him as. Rather he is a God, existent from the beginning and onward, a God, whose sphere of influence reaches even into the prayer of the white, lazy God, since it was He who taught the children of the God of light to enter a state of ecstasy and to achieve stigmatization. It was He who inspired the saints to paralyze the evil miracle through a "choc en retour," and he alone is the father of life, of procreation, development and the eternal return.

Not evil, but good is a negation. Good is a negation of passions, the passions through which everything emerges, as every passion has its Daimonium. The good is a negation of life, since all life is evil.

Satan is the positive, the eternal in itself. He is the God of the brain, he rules over the immeasurable Kingdom of thoughts, thoughts that again and again overthrow the laws and smashes the tables. He evokes the curiosity needed to solve the mystery, to interpret the runes of the night; he gives the perpetrator the boldness to destroy the fortunes of the many thousand, so that something new can emerge. He spurs on the evil desires that tear up the earth with a ravenous appetite for new conditions of existence, desires that draw near that which is most distant, drags down the sky unto the earth and shakes the kingdoms of the earth against one another like dices.

Persecuted and destroyed, he always reanimates from his own ashes, mightier, more beautiful than ever before, and, thus, the eternally defeated has become the eternal victor. A thousand times, the church believed that they had defeated him, and, as a result, they became "satanized" themselves, and became lazy, corrupted in "head and members." Because Satan is the eternal evil, and the eternal evil is life.

Everything that became something great emerged in opposition to the law, as a furious negation of the negation. Evil was the defiance in the phrase "e pur si mouve," evil was the desire that drew Columbus to undiscovered countries, evil was the mother of the chemical sciences, and all accidents—explosion, death and famine—were all attributed to astrological divination.

Good—that was the vanity of a Gregory the great, who took pride in his shameful stupidity and prohibited grammatical studies for the spiritual ones. Good—that was the charming simplemindedness of saint Francis of Assisi, who for the duration of days imitated the braying of the donkeys surrounding

the crib of the redeemer, *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*. Good was the murder of his own volition with regard to even the lowliest independent impulse. Good was the stupid *imitatio*, turned up to the degree of total senselessness.

In the name of Satan, Nietzsche taught the re-evaluation of all values. In his name, Antichrist dreams of alteration of the world of law. In his name, the artist creates, the artist, whose works one reads or watches in secret. But by the grace of God, the despicable stupidity rules the infinite mobs of children of "Light," for whom the only Law of being, the only development, is violation, and crime the only rule of existence, for whom the development of religion means satanic heresy, development in art is a sign of cerebral softening, development in politics translates treason, and development in life is punishable perversion.

That is the Satan in the history of human development, ipse philosophus, daemon, heros et omnia, the father of the sciences, the torch that illuminates humanity, shines its light on the most secret foundations of life, the miserable brooder who again and again must redraw the circle destroyed by stupidity, the lawless one and the adversary.

This Satan is Samyâsa, the father of magicians, the "mathematician," just like all of those, who have been involved with the arcane sciences, have been referred to as. He was only approachable for a few people, he was a dark aristocrat, who only revealed his counsel to a few, to Agrippa, Paracelsus, van Dee and Helmont. He only allowed himself to be conjured by the most powerful, while he sent the horde of his hypocritical servants onto the earth, so that they would be able to ignite the passions, sow hate and crime, teach humanity vanity and pride, place their sex in a state of rage, so that the blood would flush out caution and reflection, wake the beast who does not shy away from any crime to satisfy its lusts.

In the kingdom of the satanic, there is only one principle: à rebours, the reversal of all values that have become sacred through the law.

And the servants of Satan-Samyâsa came onto earth, while He, the Lucifer, the Light-bringer, the Paraclete of humanity, worked the black arts in sealed laboratories together with his magicians.

The servants of Satan will soon usurp the earth.

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[1] Roman Taborski, "Stanislaw Przybyszewski: Forgotten and . . . Re- collected Inspirer of European Modernism," in *Totenmesse: Modernism in the Culture of Northern and Central Europe*, ed. Piotr

Paszkiewicz (Warsaw: Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences, 1996) pp. 12–15; Lukas Kossowski, "Totenmesse," in *Totenmesse: Munch-Przybyszewski-Weiss*, ed. Lukas Kossowski (Warsaw: Museum Literatury, 1995) pp. 66–67.

[2] Wladyslawa Jaworska, "Munch-Przybyszewski-Weiss," in *Totenmesse: Munch-Przybyszewski-Weiss*, ed. Lukas Kossowski (Warsaw: Museum Literatury, 1995) pp. 13–15.

[3] On Przybyszewski as the "first Satanist," see Per Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar. Satanism i äldre tid* (Sundbyberg: Ouroboros, 2006) pp. 140–149; "Witches, Anarchism, and Evolutionism: Stanislaw Przybyszewski's fin-de-siècle Satanism and the Demonic Feminine," in *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aa. Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) pp. 54–65, 74–75.

[4] Tadeusz Zelenski quoted in Piotr Krakowski, "Cracow Artistic Milieu Around 1900," in *Art Around 1900 in Central Europe: Art Centres and Provinces*, ed. Piotr Krakowski and Jacek Purchla (Krakow: International Cultural Centre, 1999) p. 75.

[5] Zelenski quoted in George Klim, *Stanislaw Przybyszewski: Leben, Werk und Weltanschauung im Rahmen der deutschen Literatur der Jahrhundertwende* (Paderborn: Igel Verlag, 1992) p. 32.

[6] In fact, Przybyszewski referred to Huysmans in his memoirs as the "long-standing lord of my soul," vol. 7, s. 107: "Zeitlang Herr über meine Seele."

[7] R. Griffith, "Sexing Religion," in *The Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies*, ed. Robert Orsi (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[8] On this, see Per Faxneld, "The Devil Is Red: Socialist Satanism in Nineteenth-Century Europe," *Numen* 60:5 (2013) pp. 528–558.

[9] Stanislaw Przybyszewski, *Werke*, vol. 6 (Paderborn: Igel Verlag, 1990–2003) p. 24.

[10] Przybyszewski, *Werke*, vol. 6, p. 74.

[11] Przybyszewski, *Werke*, vol. 6, p. 67.

[12] Przybyszewski, *Werke*, vol. 6, pp. 13–16.

[13] Przybyszewski, *Werke*, vol. 6, p. 76.

[14] Przybyszewski, *Werke*, vol. 6, p. 77.

[15] Przybyszewski, *Werke*, vol. 6, p. 91.

[16] Ebba Witt-Brattström, *Dekadensens kön: Ola Hansson och Laura Marholm* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2007) p. 167.

[17] Wouter Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1996) pp. 422–441.

[18] Quoted in Kossowsky, "Totenmesse," p. 70.

[19] Wilfried Kugel, *Der Unverantwortliche: Das Leben des Hanns Heinz Ewers* (Düsseldorf: Grupello Verlag, 1992) pp. 146–148.

[20] Faxneld, *Mörkrets apostlar*, pp. 185–186.

[21] Przybyszewski, *Werke*, vol. 6 (Paderborn: Igel Verlag, 1990–2003) pp. 46–51, 55, 72–74.

8

Ben Kadosh (aka Carl William Hansen), *Den ny morgens gry* (1906)

Johan Nilsson

Carl William Hansen, who used the name Ben Kadosh in occult contexts, was born in Copenhagen, Denmark, on October 11, 1872. Originally from a working-class background,[1] Hansen received a certain level of education and, later in life, became a small-business owner, running a dairy shop in the city.[2] In the late nineteenth century Copenhagen was a center of cultural activity in Scandinavia, associated with radical writers and cultural figures such as the social network centered around Georg Brandes (1847–1927). As many other large European cities, it was also home to several organizations connected to the occult milieu of the period. Hansen seems to have been strongly attracted to such groups, which were vitalized by the fin-de-siècle taste for heterodox spiritualities, although he always appears to have remained something of an outsider.

Throughout his life, Hansen was a member of several masonic and occult organizations operating in Denmark and was well known (or perhaps notorious)[3] in the Danish occult milieu. Among the groups Hansen joined was the Ordre Martiniste[4]—linking him to the legacy of French fin-de-siècle occultism—and the Ordo Templi Orientis; although it should be stressed that he was never a member of the branch of the organization that adopted Aleister Crowley's Thelemic religion.[5] Beside his involvement in occultism, Hansen cultivated contacts with several influential cultural figures, like the Swedish author and playwright August Strindberg (1849–1912) and Gustav Meyrink (1868–1932), the author of the novel *Golem* (1914). Strindberg was, at the time of the writing of Hansen's Luciferian manifesto *Den ny morgens gry* (1906), strongly fascinated by occultism and shared some of the Dane's

obsessions, like alchemy and the god Pan.[6] Hansen himself also appears to have captivated the imagination of many of his contemporaries, and he appears as a fictionalized character in works of literature from the first half of the twentieth century, for example, the novel *Idealister* (1945) by Hans Scherfig, where the protagonist "Kados" proclaims his views on Lucifer as a creative or generative force.[7]

Den ny morgens gry (1906)

Origin

In 1906 Hansen published a short pamphlet, *Den ny morgens gry* ("The Dawn of the New Morning"), where he called for the creation of a religious movement founded on the worship of Lucifer. Nothing is known about the size of the edition, but it is a safe guess that it would have been very small. The text itself is relatively short, about nine thousand words in its entirety.

As in many related cases it is difficult to ascertain in what way the commitment to Lucifer that the text reveals corresponds to Hansen's private views. The case of Leo Taxil[8] shows the danger of carelessly taking such texts at face value, and uncomfortably little is known of Hansen's worldview except what can be glanced from *Den ny morgens gry* and *Rosea-Crucis* (1928), a later work that is a relatively unremarkable essay on Rosicrucianism. However, scattered pieces of biographical information, some examples from his correspondence and the rather striking fact that he self-identified as a Luciferian in a Danish census, indicates that Hansen was indeed serious in his commitment.[9]

Even though *Den ny morgens gry* appears to be—and in some ways actually is—a very original work, it ties in with late nineteenth-[-] and early twentieth-century occultism in several ways. As Faxneld argues, "many of [Hansen's] seemingly idiosyncratic ideas are in fact comfortably embedded in contemporary discourses of various types."[10] Hansen's speculations about the pagan roots of Freemasonry,[11] his interest in Pan, and his preoccupation with the idea of a universal life-force and its "phallic" expressions were all recurring motifs in this religious environment. The same, of course, could be said of his positive reinterpretation of the Devil, something that a number of the texts in the present volume bears witness to.[12]

Den ny morgens gry clearly reveals an interest in what was at the time the relatively recently professionalized academic study of religion, or at least its popular reception. Such an interest was in no way remarkable for an occult writer of the time,[13] and in many ways it was central to the period's fascination with the figure of the Devil. It constitutes a central strand in *Den ny morgens gry*, and an important component in Hansen's understanding of Lucifer.[14]

Instances of the tendency to draw parallels between the Devil and pre-Christian divine figures, like Prometheus, can be found in the Romantic Satanism of the early nineteenth century. Such prior examples of comparison between biblical and pagan figures, however, seldom resulted in elaborate (pseudo-)historical speculations or in theories about Satan as a more or less universal principle in human cultures. This tendency to universalism in the occult discourse on the satanic required the merging of earlier aspects of Romantic Satanism with certain non-theological, historical, and comparativist discourses on religion, be they academic or otherwise. The occult milieu of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries seems to have facilitated such merging of discourses, although it could also have happened elsewhere. Hansen exemplifies the intensified interest in the historical and transcultural manifestations of the figure of the Devil, and the type of discourse this was connected to.

It would appear that there was a certain amount of affinity between the worldview of *Den ny morgens gry* and the so-called phallicist literature of the nineteenth century. This literature—often clearly sensationalistic, at times even balancing on the border of the pornographic—can be understood partly as an expression of the many great reductionist enterprises in the interpretation of religion that had its roots in the enlightenment. At a time when others sought a unified theory of the genesis of religion in the veneration of natural or stellar phenomena, for example, the sun-cult theory, there existed an undercurrent of mythographers that saw instead the worship of sexuality and the genital organs as the beginning and center of most, or even all, religions. This pre- or pseudo-science of religion had its roots in late eighteenth-century writers like Richard Payne Knight (1751–1824) but had undergone a revival in the late nineteenth century with the writings of Hargrave Jennings (1817–1890) and others, especially within fin-de-siècle occultism.[15]

The phallicists often understood the cult of sex to be connected with a

vitalist philosophy, interpreting the sexual organs as symbols of a "generative" force, a life force conceptualized as a kind of energy that was responsible for creating and maintaining the world. This meant that sexualized representations of gods and goddesses, whether they were found in the religions of non-European cultures (like the Indian) or in the pre-Christian history of Europe, were routinely connected with such a cult of the life force. Considering that historical representations of demons and the Devil, whether they were pictorial or textual, often emphasized their sexual characteristics,[16] the interpretation of Devil worship as centered around a cult of a vital, world-sustaining force, easily suggested itself to individuals within the occult milieu at the turn of the last century.[17]

Such lines of reasoning and the phallicist hermeneutics in which they were imbedded seem a likely context for aspects of Hansen's worldview. Another possible contextualization can be reached through comparison with other reinterpretations of satanic figures within the same religious environment. Blavatsky and some Theosophists had popularized the positive reinterpretation of the Devil in fin-de-siècle occultism to a certain extent, propagating a view of Lucifer that had much in common with the Romantic Satanism of the early nineteenth century. It should be noted, however, that Hansen's Luciferianism, although similar in some aspects,[18] differs in significant ways from the Blavatsky's opinions on the subject. Hansen's Devil is far too animalistic and sexualized to have been accepted by her. Other comparisons seem more fruitful.

A special case here is the "Luciferian" Masonry created as a hoax by Marie Joseph Gabriel Antoine Jogand-Pagès (1854–1907), whose pen name was Léo Taxil (see the chapter on Taxil in the present volume). Taxil's views on Lucifer as the god of the Masons was clearly a falsehood, invented by himself and intended to demonstrate the perceived credulity of the French antimasonic movement, rather than to be presented as a religious system to be believed in. Even though the hoax had been revealed as such by 1906, Hansen's Luciferianism shows some parallels with the beliefs of Taxil's fictive Luciferian Masons.[19] It is therefore not unlikely that Taxil's Luciferians were an influence on *Den ny morgens gry*, even though much of that influence may have been filtered through the Danish writer Carl Kohl's book on Satanism, *Satan og hans kultus i vor tid* ("Satan and his Cult in Our Times").[20]

The figure of Baphomet also connects Hansen to the mainstream of French occultism, which seems to be another possible context for his vitalism. Hansen's concept of the vital force is clearly similar to the "astral light" of Eliphas Lévi, which was conceptualized, among other things, as an all-pervading fluid and was related to the figure of Baphomet.[21] This connection between a subtle force of creation immanent to the world and the figure of Baphomet also recurs in the post-Levian occultism of individuals like Aleister Crowley. Although Lévi's understanding of Baphomet was more ambivalent than his views on Lucifer, the view of a goat-like satanic figure representing the energies of life itself fits quite well with the worldview of *Den ny morgens gry*.

Content

It is difficult to discuss *Den ny morgens gry* without using what is certainly its most noticeable feature as a starting point. The book is more or less unique for its time in that it so clearly presents itself as an argument for the cult of the Devil, represented (in part) by the figure of Lucifer. Hansen is in no way ambivalent, nor does he seem to exaggerate his message for effect. Instead he repeatedly states that he wishes to create an organization, or "a circle," devoted to the worship of Lucifer. The closing paragraph of the text sums it up succinctly.

> Thus, *Lucifer-Liosber* in his entirety is a reality and no illusion, and to worship him, the hunted wolf, is proper. This little book, handed over to the judgment of its readers, will do its part in order for him, the persecuted, to regain his lost, original standing.[22]

Such is the explicitly stated intention behind the text. By far the most space, however, is given to a long exposition on the nature of the god Pan, who is said to be identical with the Devil. Pan is described as the highest of the gods, and as a divinity related to the creation and maintenance of the world. He is connected to a life force that is described as the creative force of the world and Hansen writes that the cult of Pan is the "worship and veneration of an eternal, hidden, powerful or omnipotent force of nature"[23] that is said to take visible appearance in the figure of Pan. Moreover, Pan is also called the "master builder of the great All" (Danish: "det store Alts Bygmester").

A long list of religious and mythological figures are presented as connected to Pan, among them the Gnostic Demiurge, and the masonic

Hiram, as well as diabolical figures like Lucifer, Samael, and “the Devil.” Although there is no doubt that the text presents Pan as more or less identical with Lucifer, the exact nature of their relationship is, however, somewhat obscure; Hansen states, for example, that Lucifer is the “reality” of Pan or his “exoteric outer appearance” (Danish: “exoteriske Ydre”). Nor does it make things clearer when Hansen states that Lucifer is a “Jupiter-Zeus-Marduk (or Tyr) divinity.”[24]

In a rhetorical move related to Hansen’s historical and comparativist inclinations, he detached the Devil from its Christian context, connected it with earlier pre-Christian deities, and claimed that the figure had been misunderstood.[25]

There are clear connections between Hansen’s view of Pan and the phallic literature presented above. The vitalistic view of the world as permeated by a life-giving force, often symbolically expressed as a divine fire,[26] and the tendency to interpret sexual symbols in religious myth and iconography as connected to the worship of such a force are shared by Jennings and Hansen. The latter tends to accentuate the sexual characteristics of Pan. When he gives a visual description of the god his readers are told not only of his “horns twisted backwards in an elegant arch” but also that the “symbol of the creative force of nature in his lap is erect and monstrous.”

It should be noted that Baphomet is never mentioned in *Den ny morgens gry*, although some of the descriptions of Pan sound more like the Baphomet of Eliphas Lévi than any traditional depiction of the Greek god. Pan, for example, is said to have wings. Hansen also claimed, in a letter to Carl Kohl that he venerated Baphomet, “the hidden divinity, who I worship and worship again.”[27]

Genre and Audience

As shown above, the intention behind *Den ny morgens gry* is clearly expressed in the text. Hansen wished to disseminate his teaching and proselytize for his cause with the goal of building some sort of organization dedicated, at least in part, to the worship of Lucifer. Since not much is known about the number of copies in which the text was circulated or the methods of distribution utilized by Hansen, it is difficult to know for sure what kind of audience he envisioned. It seems reasonable, however, to assume that the primary candidates for an endeavor such as this would have been members of

other occult or masonic organizations. *Den ny morgens gry* would probably be (even more) difficult to read without some sort of familiarity with the occult worldviews of the day and the particular rhetorical styles in which they were expressed. This does not rule out the possibility that Hansen, who seems to have been something of an optimist, entertained hopes of reaching wider circles.

Reception and Influence

Very little is known about the early impact of *Den ny morgens gry*. Hansen did indeed organize a small circle of like-minded people, among others the illustrator Niels Wivel (1855–1914), but there are only guesses as to the circle's activities and in what way, if any, they were connected to the subject matter of Hansen's pamphlet. Further research into the twentieth-century history of Scandinavian occultism and Freemasonry might show if the pamphlet fell into oblivion or if it still circulated after Hansen's death in 1936. What is certain is that the text resurfaced in the 1990s and drew some interest in the Swedish and Danish occult environments of that time. In 1993, an English translation of the text was printed in the magazine *The Fenris Wolf*, published by influential Swedish occultist and Church of Satan member Carl Abrahamsson (b. 1966).[28] The translation was made by the Dane Bjarne Salling Pedersen, who in 2005 went on to found an organization called the Neo-Luciferian Church, partly based on the Luciferian teachings of Hansen.[29]

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Excerpts from Ben Kadosh, *Den ny morgens gry* (1906)

Translation from Danish: Johan Nilsson and Rebecca Bugge

A time of upheaval is near.[30] Spiritual, as well as material, transformation is at hand. Ancient philosophy meets modern thought head on. And the knowledge of the ancients likewise meets the material teachings of the present day. The continent is in a state of ferment. Strong currents are moving in the deep. Partly political, partly material and partly of a spiritual nature.

The movements of a spiritual nature include those of a religious variety which are different depending on their origin and point of departure, that is to say, the source or sources accounting for their cause. Accordingly, these movements can be divided into (1) those that take their departure: from conventional religious beliefs, and for this reason end up with a broader, deeper or, often, very superficial interpretation of these, (2) those that take new perspectives as starting points, and (3) those that draw on ancient sources in order to find stable ground.

Among the first group are the different kinds of sectarians; following those are more or less the forerunners of “free thought,” or those that for different reasons do not wish to commit to any religious belief; included in this group, among others, are “the humanists.” To the third group belong those orientalists whose mission is of a religious, cultural or aesthetic nature, so

called “*occultists*” or “*free masons*,” and, as a link between this and the former group: the “*spiritualists*,” who, without the aid of magic in the strict sense, claim to be able to contact a non-material, disembodied spiritual sphere, where the spirits are comprised only of the souls of the departed, and not, as in magic: of higher intelligences exempted from reincarnation or elementary beings, principles of nature.

Occultism stems from an appropriation and practice of—following an interest in—the magic of the ancients, or from a practice of secret, inherited teachings, once called “sorcery,”[31] since one no longer considers magic—in the higher, original meaning of this word—to be an unworkable impossibility or something supernatural, but instead sees in it the most natural thing in the world—like so many other things—if one is only able to fully explore nature and its laws, roads and paths, which are not impossible to follow.

For this reason the word “sorcery,” which is more or less used ironically to refer to magic, is completely inappropriate.

Freemasonry—of the original *esoteric* variety, that is—constitutes the ceremonial act and deed of magic, or the form, according to which the teachings of magic are learned, besides constituting also the form of a secret, *esoteric*, religious cult of the divine images of the ancients, or of the primary principles of nature, the *creative forces of the cosmos*.

Consequently freemasonry becomes a guardian of the esoteric cult and teachings of the ancients, of their most valuable heritage, that which is also the true task of masonry.

The teachings of the ancients—*exoterically* understood—have become the model for the formulation of the dogmas of the Christian church.

Everything that the western church possesses in terms of dogmas etc., has been “borrowed” or frankly: “taken” from oriental, so-called “pagan” sources; it has nothing that it—in this regard—rightly can call its own, in the sense that it derives from the Church itself.

Thus Satan and Lucifer, in the oldest teachings of the Church, are not endemic to the Christian faith, as is the case in every exoteric religion. They both belong solely to an esoteric cult and to magic, and their meaning, role and appearance are very different from what is claimed by Christian exegetes. The teaching concerning them can be considered an extract of the essence of the secret knowledge of the ancients.

Jeve is the old Pan in Israelite form.

The *Sheïtan* of the Israelites and tartars, the lord and majesty of the dragon,

the foremost expression of the creative force of the cosmos, have his origin in China and Egypt.

In the esot. Chinese freemasonry, Sheïtan is the expression of the watchful, disembodied creator of the cosmos.

Lucifer is the “sum”—or I—of the material world, the creative *logon* or force. Both personal and impersonal or individual and non-individual, just as everything else in nature, as it should be. Actually, he is the object and the individual in the third person. If one possesses the necessary keys or the knowledge to release, or call him, one can evoke or supplicate—conjure—him forth; if not, one has to be content with receiving him in the spirit, disembodied, and according to his literal description.

Lucifer in his own form is not the ludicrous illusion they have tried to make him into, but a true, physical reality, albeit of a semi-material nature.

As the creative force in the immaterial, abstract, disembodied, but nonetheless active world incites to thought and research, so does the energy of the matter that transforms into life—that which, to us humans, is the most positive—a substitute for the abstract—active aspect of nature.

Lucifer is the potency of the forces of living matter in individual, personified form, the “sum” of creative nature.

This little leaflet of agitation has been created as propaganda for the sum or I of creative nature and its purpose will be this: to encourage the reinstatement and worship of the Pan-ideals and the Pan-substitutes of the ancients—based on a sincere understanding of them and their worth.

The dissemination of knowledge about, and the elevation of, the Lucifer Hiram of occult, esoteric freemasonry will thus be the main task of this little book’s propaganda and the manner in which it will recruit followers. Accordingly, its task has worthy claims to interest.

In the hope that this my endeavor, with the assistance of like-minded individuals, will contribute to the creation of a closed circle, more or less in the shape of a new esoteric masonic order, that will consecrate itself to a cult similar to that of the ancients, the present work is hereby submitted to the consideration and benevolence of my readers.

For further information, especially with regard to the rediscovery of said keys, I will be available in my home at any time to occultists and similar seekers of secret knowledge.

[…]

Lucifer becomes the true exoteric exterior of *Pan*! *Resembling: the appearance of the energy of darkness*. The energy of darkness—bringing forth the light—is exactly the right expression—unfortunately completely misunderstood—of *Lucifer*! *Lucifer* is the true creator of things—the reality of *Pan*!

A consequence of this is that *Pan* is not the insignificant figure that humankind wants to make of him in its largely childish, naïve understanding of him, which allows men to mock him at their discretion.

Lucifer in his true reality and sublimity is a divine majesty!

It is not without reason that his ornament is: *the Morning Star*!

But below the morning star: *Venus*. *Venus* is the garment of *Lucifer*.

In amazement one may ask: how can the completely masculine *Lucifer* simultaneously be the feminine *Venus*? Regarding this one may simply answer: Lucifer hides behind Venus. He constitutes the virile strength, the occult force in her.

[…]

The main natural principle of Lucifer is the *character of the serpent*, the image of knowledge and relative evil; even though it pertains to *Hermes-Mercury*, one cannot exclude its *Venus-phallus-aspect*.

Thus, "*Lilith*" is likewise: "*La maitresse du Lucifer*," not so much *Lucifer's* mistress but an aspect of him.

Neither is Lucifer the horrid figure that humanity in its naïve imagination wants to make of him. In reality he is beautiful in his dark, apparent obscenity.

Since Lucifer is the energy of darkness, he is the personification and the individualization of the same.

Thus, once again the energy of darkness: that which moves within our shadow life, and what is therefore closely related: *the crookedness of things*.

[…]

If the "shadow life" fills us with dread—due to conceptions of it which we have been given—it is no more than a consequence of our ignorance and our unfamiliarity with it. If we become accustomed to approach it closely, the terror and the emptiness will disappear, or: exist no more.

[…]

Thus, *Lucifer-Liosber* in his entirety is a reality and no illusion, and to worship him, the hunted wolf, is proper. This little book, handed over to the judgement of its readers, will do its part in order for him, the persecuted, to regain his lost, original standing.

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[1] He was born out of wedlock to a working-class woman and grew up in one of Copenhagen's poorest neighborhoods.

[2] Regarding Hansen's life and thought, see Peder Madsen and Bjarne Salling Pedersen, "Den Hellige Søn—en biografisk skitse," in *Den ny morgens gry* (Hafnia: Kadosh Press, 2006). Per Faxneld, "The Strange Case of Ben Kadosh: A Luciferian Pamphlet from 1906 and Its Current Renaissance," *Aries, Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism* 2:1 (2011) pp. 1–22. Per Faxneld, "'In Communication with the Powers of Darkness': Satanism in Turn-of-the Century Denmark, and Its Use as a Legitimating Device in Present-Day Esotericism," in *Occultism in a Global Perspective*, ed. Henrik Bogdan and Gordan Djurdjevic (Durham, NC: Acumen, 2013). For a discussion of Hansen's relation to the history of Satanism, see Ruben van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) pp. 286–288. Massimo Introvigne, *Satanism: A Social History* (Leiden: Brill, 2016) pp. 227–229.

[3] Faxneld points out that Hansen was the center of several rumors claiming that he practiced black magic and commanded mysterious forces, rumors that he seemed to "rather enjoy." Faxneld, "In Communication with the Powers of Darkness," p. 59.

[4] Hansen is said to have been initiated in 1898. Madsen and Pedersen, "Den Hellige Søn—en biografisk skitse," p. 4.

[5] Hansen was never a member of the branch of the order that incorporated the teachings of Crowley into its curriculum and initiatory structure. Even if he had been, these teachings would not have influenced Hansen's views of Lucifer in 1906 when *Den ny morgens gry* was published. At that time, Crowley was in his early thirties and had published very little of relevance to the subject of Hansen's pamphlet. On Crowley and Thelema, see the chapter in the present volume.

[6] Subjects on which their opinions differed strongly, however, which probably did not make their friendship easier.

[7] Hans Scherfig, *Idealister* (København: Gyldendal, 1945).

[8] See the chapter on Taxil in the present volume.

[9] Faxneld, "The Strange Case of Ben Kadosh"; "In Communication with the Powers of Darkness," p. 59.

[10] Faxneld, "In Communication with the Powers of Darkness," p. 57.

[11] Hansen was far from alone in the belief that Masonry might have had pagan (or at least very old) roots; similar speculations can be found in the writings of several representatives of the occult revival. See for example John Yarker, *Notes on the Scientific and Religious Mysteries of Antiquity* (London: John Hogg, 1872).

[12] It was the fact that Hansen made the Devil the main figure in his religious system (at least as expressed in *Den ny morgens gry*) and his willingness to identify as a "luciferian" that made him original, rather than the fact that he made a positive reinterpretation of Lucifer, something that was not

uncommon in itself.

[13] It also gave many of the most representative works of the period their curious and characteristic appearance of hybridity—part history book, and part theological tract.

[14] This tendency in Hansen's pamphlet is probably partly a consequence of its substantial debt to Carl Kohl's *Satan og hans kultus i vor tid*, a work that he refers to several times. Kohl's study of Satanism is largely historical in its approach and appeals to Charcot and other scientific and scholarly authorities. Carl Kohl, *Satan og hans kultus i vor tid* (Copenhagen: Det Nordiske Forlag, 1902).

[15] On Jennings and his phallicism, see See Joscelyn Godwin, "Hargrave Jennings," *Hermetic Journal* (1991) pp. 49–77. Joscelyn Godwin, "Jennings, Hargrave," in *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*. There are also some valuable but brief discussions of Jennings in Christine Ferguson, "Occult Sciences," in *The Routledge Research Companion to Nineteenth-Century British Literature and Science*, ed. J. Holmes and S. Ruston (London and New York: Routledge, 2017).

[16] The carnality of the Devil is, of course, also a motif in older Christian portrayals of Satan, as well as in Romantic Satanism. Ruben van Luijk, "Sex, Science, and Liberty," in *The Devil's Party*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Petersen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) pp. 41–52.

[17] There are several examples of this kind of interpretation, the most obvious perhaps being the "solar-phallic" ideology of Aleister Crowley and the phallic Baphomet of Eliphas Lévi.

[18] They could both be considered examples of the occult reception of Romantic Satanism in Ruben van Luijk's understanding of this concept, see Ruben van Luijk, "Sex, Science, and Liberty." But while Blavatsky emphasized the aspect of Lucifer as the light bearer and revealer of knowledge (Luijk's second aspect of Romantic Satanism), Hansen emphasized the Devil's more earthly and animalistic aspects (Luijk's first aspect).

[19] Perhaps it is even more accurate to say that it shows some parallels with the beliefs of Taxil's Luciferians as those beliefs were recounted by Carl Kohl. The latter was aware that Taxil's works were not to be trusted, but still thought that aspects of them might have been true. According to Kohl, Luciferians do not regard themselves as evil, nor are they primarily interested in blasphemy or anti-Christianity. Rather, Lucifer represents knowledge and righteous rebellion to his followers, and his worship is associated with Nietzcshean morality as well as with political radicalism. Kohl also views this kind of Luciferianism as an expression of historical trends at the time and quotes the French occultist and journalist Jules Bois, who stated that Lucifer is the god of a future that has no god. Luciferianism to Kohl is associated with Freemasonry and sexuality, two distinct components of Hansen's Luciferianism. The interpretation that Hansen more or less built his ideology on inverted antimasonic propaganda is also suggested by the fact that the Luciferians according to Kohl were recruited from the grade *knight of kadosch* in the masonic rite of Memphis and Misraïm.

[20] Hansen was clearly aware of the Taxil hoax. It is reasonable to assume that the affair would have been known in his social circles. Even if by some chance he did not hear of it from French acquaintances, the affair apparently made some impressions in Scandinavia. The Swedish author C. Skog, for example, published a pamphlet called *"Satans synagoga" eller afslöjandet af frimureriets fruktansvärda styggelser af påfven Leo XIII och Leo Taxil m. fl.* (" 'Satan's Synagogue' or the Revelation of the Terrible Abominations of Freemasonry by the Pope Leo XIII and Leo Taxil et al.") in 1906. Finally, various details of the affair are recounted in Carl Kohl's *Satan og hans kultus i vor tid*.

[21] Lévi called the astral light "the chief agent of life" (l'agent principal de la vie). Eliphas Lévi, *Dogme et Rituel de la haute magie* vi 1 (Paris: Germer Baillière, 1861) p. 309.

[22] "Saaledes i sit Hele er Lucifer-Liosber en Virkelighed og ikke nogen Illusion og Tilbedelsen af ham, den jagede Ulv, har sin Berettigelse, og til at han, den forudrettede, kan komme til at tilbageerholde sin tabte oprindelige Stilling, er det, at dette lille Skrift skal bidrage sit, og som hermed anbefales til Læsernes Velvilje."

[23] "Dyrkelsen og Tilbedelsen af evig, forborgen, mægtig eller alt formaaende Naturkraft."

[24] This tendency to create chains of equivalency, tying together deities from different cultures and historical periods, perhaps by searching for universal principles behind culturally particular religious manifestations, obviously has a long history in itself and could be legitimized by the correspondence-based thinking that was so common in esotericism. In the occult milieu that emerged in the late nineteenth century, the taste for comparativism was however also influenced by the popularization of the research of the newly created academic study of religion.

[25] He quotes from Carl Kohl, who writes that "The great Pan was reborn . . . as the Satan of Christianity." Furthermore, he states that the church has received its doctrines about the Devil from earlier sources, and that it based its views on this subject only on the exoteric (and presumably superficial and incomplete) part of the "teachings of the ancients."

[26] A "supersensual, superessential, divinely operative, celestial Fire," as Jennings describes it. Hargrave Jennings, *Phallicism* (London: George Redway, 1884) p. 40.

[27] Cited in Faxneld, "In Communication with the Powers of Darkness," p. 59.

[28] Printed as "Lucifer-Hiram: The Return of the World's Master Builder," *The Fenris Wolf: The Journal of Contemporary Occultism* 3: 72–97.

[29] Faxneld, "In Communication with the Powers of Darkness," pp. 66f.

[30] Ben Kadosh, *Den ny morgens gry: Lucifer Hiram* (Hafnia: 1906) pp. 1ff., 18f., 22. Translation by Johan Nilsson and Rebecca Bugge. Hansen's peculiar style is an immediately noticeable part of the original text and has often been discussed alongside his ideas in connection to the later reception of *Den ny morgens gry*. For these reasons we have tried to retain as much of it as possible, including the prolific and sometimes non-standard use of punctuation marks and italics, and the, at times, awkward syntax.

[31] "Trolddom." Note that this word could also mean magic or witchcraft. Translator's note.

9

Maria de Naglowska, *La Lumière du sexe* (1932) and "Satanisme masculin, Satanisme féminin" (1933)

Hans Thomas Hakl and Michele Olzi

Maria de Naglowska (French rendering of the name Marija Dmitrevna Naglovskaja)[1] was a writer, journalist, poetess, and teacher, as well as an occultist of Russian origin. The daughter of the Polish general Dmitry Naglovsky,[2] Maria was born in 1883 at Saint Petersburg. Orphaned of both of parents at only age twelve, she was sent to the Smol'nyj Institute to be raised. The meeting and infatuation with the Jewish composer and musician Moše Hopenko[3] marks a crucial turning point in Maria's life, as her plan to marry him was met with opposition from her family, forcing her to flee the country and elope with him. Together they first took refuge in Germany and then in Switzerland, where they decided to settle down. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, Maria tried her hand at teaching French to members of the Russian community in Geneva[4] and took up a career in journalism. In the meantime, Moše Hopenko, due his Zionist sentiments, decided to leave for Palestine.[5] Maria, instead, was expelled from Switzerland for making a pacifist speech in public.[6] This was how, in the 1920s, she ended up living in Rome. In the capital she participated in avant-garde art movements[7] and had her first encounter with the world of occultism through meeting, among others, the Roman philosopher, Dadaist, and esotericist Julius Evola.[8] She also took part in activities of the Theosophical Society during her following stay in Alessandria.[9] On September 3, 1929, she arrived in Paris. Here de Naglowska[10] took on publishing with *La Flèche—Organe d'Action Magique* (*The Arrow—Organ of Magical Action*); the scope of this journal was to

disseminate her religious teachings, which prophesied the advent of the "Third Term of the Trinity." Her message was additionally advocated through the activities of her *la Sophiale* group (from the nickname she was given in Montparnassian art milieus), also known as *La Confrerie des Chevaliers la Flèche d'Or* (*The Confraternity of the Knights of the Golden Arrow*), which was a mystic-philosophical circle whose meetings took place at public locations, for example the café La Coupole, or the Studio Raspail.[11]

As explained by Massimo Introvigne, the work and doctrine of Maria de Naglowska fit perfectly into the French subculture that was "first occultist, then artistic and literary" during the first half of the twentieth century.[12] In the same way, her doctrine is close to the conceptual model of the "(Post)modern occult" analyzed by Wouter Hanegraaff, a category he employs to demonstrate how a determined secularization process and modernization took place within Western esotericism over the course of the centuries.[13] This process plays a fundamental role in understanding the worldview of Maria de Naglowska, especially if we take into consideration some of the specific consequences of modernization. Marco Pasi has analyzed how contemporary occultism and modernity have developed a series of interactions that revolve around certain topics, such as "gender" and "body and sexuality."[14]

In the doctrine of Maria de Naglowska, there is a tendency to envision the world as a universe animated by divine (or divinized) forces. This allows one to view God as the accepted creator of these forces/energies, who reveals the occult mechanism behind the entire creation to humans thanks to their manifestation in the material world. Through this revelation, the single individual gains consciousness of a series of existing correspondences between the self and the divine. By the means of a specific "practice," the doctrine focuses on how to build connections with the divine universe. de Naglowska envisioned a central role for women in this practice. She believed that the female body bears the burden, and the honor, of guiding the human race toward a certain spiritual destination, perpetuating the occult mechanism of the divine cosmos. The doctrine reveals a distinct influence from ideas originating in Russia and eastern Europe.[15] The organization also taught certain ritual methods, more specifically the practice of "Magical Love" and/or "Sexual Magic," concepts that are explored in de Naglowska's works.[16]

After her arrival in Paris 1930, she laid the foundation for “a new religion,” proclaiming herself its poetess and priestess. Its doctrine was the “Third Term of the Trinity.” By dividing the history of humanity into three phases, each period corresponded to one term of the Christian Trinity as well as to one of the principle Abrahamic religions. There is, however, a peculiarity that distinguishes the thought of de Naglowska from Christian symbolism and orthodoxy; the first two phases, representing Judaism and Christianity, respectively, are the age of the Father and the age of the Son, while the third phase is the age of the Holy Spirit, which in her case is feminine in nature. The doctrine of the *Confrerie des Chevaliers de la Flèche d’Or* consequently predicted the arrival of the “Spiritual era of the Mother.” The religion’s practical aim was to “build the temple of the Third Term of the Trinity.” The temple is sometimes identified as an ideal place or even the body of one of the group members, according to the situation and ritual context. For this purpose, the initiatic group is organized according to a particular hierarchy,[17] in order to introduce and perform the celebrations for the arrival of a new era, known as “Golden Masses.”

The temple of the *Confrerie*[18] is, by nature, “Satanic” for de Naglowska;[19] hence, the figure of Satan plays a principle role in it all, right next to God and Jesus Christ. However, Satan is reinterpreted in a positive light, as having an essential cosmic role to fulfil. Satan remains the spirit of dualism and opposition that characterizes symbolically the darkest period in human spiritual history, but is at the same time conceptualized as the beneficial expression of a certain Promethean force and aspiration that opposes all established order, which sometimes resorts to evil to achieve an ultimate aim.

The texts that have been selected to represent de Naglowska’s figure of Satan and form of Satanism come from two different publications; the first is a chapter from *La Lumière du sexe—rituel d’initiation satanique selon la doctrine du Troisième Terme de la Trinité,* and the second an article from a number of the periodical *La Flèche*. Although their compositions differ, they both share the same topic and purpose.

La Lumière du sexe (1938)

Origin

In the fourteenth issue of *La Flèche* of October 15, 1932, the publication of

de Naglowska's new work *La Lumière du Sexe*[20] was announced. This was the second text,[21] in chronological order, published by the Russian writer for the "Éditions de la Flèche" publishing house.[22] It must be noted that some of the main aspects of the doctrine described in this text had already been analyzed in various *Fléche* articles.[23] In the same year she founded the *Confrerie des Chevaliers de la Flèche d'or*.[24]

Greater clarifications on the role of the text derives from its historical context. As Massimo Introvigne has shown, Maria de Naglowska made her debut in the Parisian quarters of Montparnasse. In its versatile cultural environment, members of avant-guard art movements (such as Surrealism) rubbed elbows with exponents of first-wave feminism,[25] and advocates of antimasonic, Catholic political journalism.[26] Infiltrating the latter milieu, a man calling himself Léo Taxil (see separate chapter on Taxil in the present volume) had, as an elaborate prank, spread a fake conspiracy-theory prank, involving the memoirs of a presumed "High Initiate of Freemasonry,"[27] who proclaimed that "Satan holds the true political power in France on account of Lucifer and his international organisation, Freemasonry." According to the same sources, Luciferian Masons performed orgiastic rituals and physical unions with Satan himself within their lodges. This clearly explains why *sex and the devil* were hot topics when *La Lumière du Sexe* was published, in three-hundred copies accompanied by eight illustrations by Lucien Helbé. The book's chapter on "Reason" is reproduced here to exemplify de Naglowska's form of Satanism.

Content

La Lumiére du Sexe—Rituel d'Initiation Satanique selon la Doctrine du Troisième Terme de la Trinité (*The Light of Sex—Ritual of Satanic Initiation according to the Doctrine of the Third Term of the Trinity*) is divided into twelve chapters.[28] Since it concerns a Satanic initiation ritual, the title itself reveals a further subdivision: the first part (chapters 1–7) of the text is concerned with the theory, and the second part (chapters 8–12) describes the practice. Our passage is from the first part of the text.

La Lumière du Sexe introduces itself as one of the "gospels" of the "Third Term of the Trinity," a scathing critique of bourgeois society and morality, and a first testimony of the "Satanism" de Naglowska preaches. Presenting

the dogmas of her "new religion,"[29] Maria de Naglowska explains the spiritual history of humanity divided into three phases, as previously mentioned.[30] The opening of the book first states that humanity (at the time she writes) is going through the second phase of its spirituality, which she calls the "dark age."[31] She then predicts a crisis that will take place at the end of this age, which in turn will pave the way for the next phase of the spirit.

The doctrine of Maria de Naglowska is grounded on a crucial axiom: "God is Life, and Life is God." God is constant Becoming, and not an absolute "I am, who I am" (Exodus 3:14). God has generated a polarity, a dialectic cosmogonic process requiring negation as his dialectic counterpart in order to create the world. In order to preserve the Life of the universe and of each single individual, God produced pairs of opposites (such as Truth and Falsehood). This doctrine teaches, therefore, that these opposites, which allow the preservation of the world, are present everywhere including in humans themselves. This makes Satan's role in her system intelligible as well.[32]

What rejects Life (equal to God) in humans is human reason. Reason is associated with Satan by de Naglowska, since both fight against God. Reason/Satan allows humans to discover the contradictory nature of reality and to participate in it. Taking into account that God negates himself in the process of the original creation, the initiate who wishes to become a part of the dialectic process has to first serve Satan in order to serve God. This concept is designated the "secret doctrine of the Royal Art," or the "Calvary of the Royal Art."[33] Understanding this, the initiate can access the "hidden mechanics" of events and perpetuate this dialectic through organizing groups, celebrating certain rituals, and spreading the Third Term of the Trinity's message.

The fourth chapter illustrates de Naglowska's Devil in all its aspects. The text provides different levels of interpretation for Satan. There is certainly a literary interpretation where Satan is conceived in the sense described by Goethe in his famous *Faust*, as the negating spirit, and/or opponent of the divine polarity as seen by orthodoxy. However, we also have an interpretation that was held by the formerly mentioned occultist milieu, in which Satan paradoxically is a *Deus ex Machina*.

The text presents an initiatory rite, and de Naglowska compares the route taken by the initiates to climbing a symbolic peak,[34] under the guidance of

Satan. Once they reach the top, they will be hanged and their body will be left to fall down the mountain, but they must blindly believe in Satan's promise that they will survive the ordeal. In the exact moment they fall, their religious service will cease to be Satanic and will become divine; they will understand that after serving Satan, they will be able to serve God, since the service in reality is only one. In climbing the peak, the initiates will face various temptations. De Naglowska notes that these originate from God, not Satan. The ritual is intended exclusively for male initiates, and during these temptations they must confront the female sex—whose role is to aid them in their victory over themselves by conquering their desires and fears.

Sexuality lies at the core of *La Lumière du Sexe*. The text offers a ritual guide for officiating the "Golden Masses" intended for a later era, as well as a social directive for when the future era of the spirit is born. Satan is associated with sex and specifically female sexuality. During the ascent of the Satanic peak, Woman becomes an initiatory companion by means of whom the trials are overcome. Satan has entrusted her as his priestess with the *mystery of hanging*,[35] which awaits all initiates at the end of their journey. She accompanies the male during the initiatory rite in order to reveal the mystery of creation by the means of opposites. However, female sexual activity within the rites and the doctrine of de Naglowska is associated with the satanic. Satan is the spirit that denies and opposes Life. Therefore, sexual activity in the *Sophiale* group rituals does not have the function of generating pleasure or children. Instead, it was supposed to bring about the new era of the spirit, the female era.

Genre and Audience

La Lumière du Sexe is a doctrinal text, as well as a source of guidance for those who wish to undertake an initiatory journey in accordance with de Nagloska's spiritual vision. Despite its partly polemical tone, the book genuinely attempts to expound de Naglowska's thought and spiritual mission. The focus on biblical themes and the criticism of elements in the main Abrahamic religions provide insight into the worldview of the author.

La Lumière du Sexe was aimed at an audience with a prior interest in de Naglowska's message, including subscribers to the periodical *La Flèche*, as well as members of the *Confrérie de Chevaliers de la Flèche d'or*. The size of the original edition of three hundred printed copies gives an idea of the

limited circulation of *La Lumière du Sexe*.

Reception and Influence

In spite of the small print run, the book achieved a passable influence in the occultist, artistic, and literary milieus of Paris in the 1930s. As previously mentioned, de Naglowska had followers in the Surrealist movement and the Parisian artistic scene. Among those who took an interest in Naglowska's ideas were writers and poets such as Claude d'Ygé (1912–1964) and Jean Carteret (1906–1980) as well as Surrealists like the painter Camille Bryen (1907–1977) and the sculptor Germaine Richier (1902–1959).[36] Later, Naglowska's work was rediscovered by the writer Sarane Alexandrian (1927–2009).[37] A revival of her doctrine and writings took place in the 1990s, when the French branch of the *Ordo Templi Orientis* reprinted the Russian writer's work. In the 2010s, some of her work was translated into English and published by Inner Traditions in the United States, attesting to further renewed interest.[38]

"Satanisme masculin, Satanisme féminin" (1933)

Origin

On March 15, 1933, de Naglowskas article "Satanisme masculin, Satanisme féminin" appeared in the sixteenth issue of *La Flèche*.[39] The periodical was founded to disseminate ideas and work for the erection of "a temple of the Third Term of the Trinity (T.T.T.), in which the Golden Masses will be celebrated."[40] The article in question was likely seen as part of the advocacy for the Third Term of the Trinity and de Naglowska's activities in general. However, the specific context is more complex. In the past de Naglowska had worked as a translator. Specifically, she had gained a certain notoriety after the translation of *Magia Sexualis* by Paschal Beverly Randolph (1825–1875).[41] This publication had started various rumors about her, among others that she was a disciple of Randolph. Rumors aside, sexual magic certainly played a part in Naglowska's general spiritual vision. Its theory and practice characterized the preparation, as well as the future celebration, of the "Golden Masses" in an essential way. The practice of these Masses had

somewhat satanic associations for de Naglowska. After the publication of *La Lumière du Sexe*, in which she defined the temple where the Golden Masses were to take place, as "Satanic," she did not hesitate to use the same description for her public ceremonies.[42]

The article "Satanisme masculin, Satanisme féminin" outlines the female role in the doctrine of the T.T.T.[43] and unfolds its *Satanic* nature. The conception of the female figure, the female body, and female sexuality in these doctrines has little to do with the theories of modern feminism.[44] According to Naglowska the future of humanity is shaped ritually and dogmatically through the female sex and the true female nature.

Content

"Satanisme masculin, Satanisme feminin" was a response to those who saw de Naglowska as a "disciple" of Paschal Beverly Randolph. Naglowska begins by noting that though the translation of *Magia Sexualis* and some parts of *Lumière du Sexe* do not contradict each other, this does not make her a disciple of the American sex magician. She denies serving as an extension of Randolph's work and claims that the doctrine she teaches is entirely new.

According to de Naglowska the mistake of Randolph and other initiatory groups is their idea that an "independent evolution of each soul particle" took place that inevitably led to "a spiritual egoism in men and women."[45] The individualism that is consequently perpetuated, by both the teaching of Randolph and modern society, is an aspect of what de Naglowska had already described as "the world of life," or of "appearance."[46] She regards this individuality, as an illusion provoked by male Satanism.[47]

De Naglowska's Satan is an androgynous spirit. Due to this, he has a feminine side.[48] What is more, the "negative action" of Satan strictly pertains to his masculine side;[49] female Satanism and male Satanism are united as one from the very creation onward;[50] the opposition to God has allowed male Satanism to perpetuate the world of appearance and spiritual egoism previously mentioned. The eternal succession of the three phases of humanity would be impossible if there only existed male Satanism. In the true nature of things, Satan is also the "Guardian of the Threshold," which becomes "Woman-Satan," and later transforms into "Satan the Divine Mother."[51] The outer manifestation of the female side reveals the true nature of things.

However, the condemned and demonized feminine side of Satan upholds the fate of the universe. The Satanic nature of women makes females and their body the center of a soteriological (related to salvation) mission that will bring about "the Period of the Mother"—in other words, the Third Term of the Trinity. Female sexuality itself is the mediator of this process.

In *La Lumière du Sexe*[52] liturgical rituals were (symbolically) described to the followers of *La Confrérie des Chevaliers de la Flèche d'Or* in order to engage and retrace the "Calvary of Satan." These rituals (which are presented as a preparation for the future Golden Masses) are pervaded by elements of sex magic. In the dynamics of the rituals the woman takes a passive/active role, for instance, by coldly receiving her partner, or without being carried away by her feelings during orgasm. The role that she takes has to be that of a priestess, and "neither that of a prostitute, nor a wife." She must be Mother and creator of the world and the new era of the Spirit. "The woman, who shall defeat Satan by means of her womb, will be the one who regenerates the world [. . .] and from that moment, from the day of creation onward, the female sex has looked out, through all women, for a way to defeat Satan."[53] Satan is the female force, which will transform into the "Solar Virgin" once it is liberated from the conceptual boundaries that have kept it locked up in a secondary dimension.[54] Such liberation/renewal will take place both via the body of the priestess during the ritual ceremonies (the Golden Masses), and through the worship of the female side revealed in Satan.

Genre and Audience

De Naglowska's objective, and what her article achieved, was the exaltation of women in every aspect, as well as the development of a peculiar and paradoxical type of "feminism." Female figures are analyzed from the perspective of a female-centered Satanism. The transition from the common conception of Satan, to Satan the Divine Mother, or the Solar Virgin, is the fundamental fact by which the female figure, with the attribution of passive sexuality, is no longer a "spirit of opposition," but one of comprehension. Satan and sexuality together become the androgynous *light bearer*.

The message of female Satanism was certainly acknowledged by members of de Naglowska's small organizations.[55] The elements of sexual magic, present in both the rituals and the doctrine of de Naglowska, are also perceptible in the article. The limited distribution of *La Flèche*[56] and the

specific nature of the topic suggest that the message was reserved to a small and selected number of people only.[57]

Reception and Influence

The influence of de Naglowska's article is certainly perceived in the 1930s among those in the occultist and surrealist movements. De Naglowska's article would gain more popularity in the 1990s, however, thanks to a revival, which was accompanied by the republication and reevaluation of her work by the French branch of the *O.T.O.*, and later by translations published by Inner Traditions in the United States in the 2010s.[58]

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Excerpts from Maria de Naglowska, *La Lumière du sexe* (1932)

Translation from French: Hans Thomas Hakl and Michele Olzi

The Reason

Having meditated on the things written in the preceding pages, the anxious

disciple asks himself this question:

> “Is human Reason so powerful that God himself should have any cause to fear it?”[59] “Can Man—so small a creature—be a menace to the whole Universe?”
>
> “What is this strange enigma?”

Here is the teaching of the doctrine of the Third Term of the Trinity on this subject:

> To penetrate into the heart of the mysteries, everything must be considered in its symbolic sense, and Man, whose three sacred points (the Three Angles) are found respectively in the head, in the Heart, and in the organ that is not named because one is ignorant of its Light, which alone by itself symbolises the totality of Life (=God).

Each portion of the visible world is not a part of God (=Life), but a complete symbol of the latter.

The totality is in each particle, and each particle reflects all, for Life (=God) sports there in fullness.

Modern people conceive of that with difficulty, because they have acquired the habit of ignoring Life (=God) and studying only Death (=its/his Shadow).

But we are not addressing ourselves to the “modern” human.

The anxious disciple – he who interests us – will understand, instead, that human Reason, in spite of the infinitely small place that it occupies in the immensity of the Universe, is at the same time, by itself, the whole danger, for total destructive power resides in its fullness in each brain.

We forbid our disciples to imagine Satan (=the Spirit of Evil or the Spirit of Destruction) as living outside ourselves, for such imagining is proper to idolaters, but we recognize that the name is true.

We shall say therefore that Reason is in the service of Satan. We shall also say that it is Satan, because Day and Night protest, like him, against Life (=God).

Reason must protest—we have already said it—because, if it did not continue to protest, Life (God) would not continue to be. But this obligation is at the same time a Calvary for it.

Here we touch on one of the greatest mysteries, carefully hidden by the Initiates in the secret doctrine of the Royal Art: the Calvary of Satan! . . . Follow us well, while chasing any idolatrous imagination out of your mind.

Satan (=Reason) can do everything, but it will never do anything completely.

It is what God is: Life, but in the inverse sense. That is why its action tends toward destruction.

The destruction of the visible world, that is to say of the Manifestation of Life (=God), appears to its desire as the very condition of its liberation.

It is because of this that it struggles Day and Night against God (=Life).

Its total liberation will never be attained, but if it ceased to destroy what it does destroy, all the dynamism spread throughout the world would stop, and Nothingness would reign.

The negative action of Satan is therefore absolutely necessary to God (=Life), just as his continual deception. There you have the tragedy of the Royal Art!

Meanwhile, those who devote themselves to it do eminently priestly work, and those who persevere, climbing toward the Summit, are the Sacrificers of themselves. For well before attaining the Summit, the Initiate knows that up there he will be hanged (twelfth arcanum of the Tarot).

There is no Initiate who does not serve Satan before serving God, for it is only at the supreme moment of the Fall from the Summit that the Royal Art, exercised by the disciple, ceases to be Satanic and becomes Divine.

And one will not fall from the Peak before having arrived there!

O disciple! If you are disturbed by these things, won't you ask us whether Christ himself served Satan before serving God, his father?

And would you like to know whether the great Moses followed the same Calvary?

Yes . . . we say Yes, because it is the Truth.

The Son of God (=the Son of Man) had to suffer and be hanged in order to cast back upon all men the power which, kept in his illumined mind, would have infallibly meant the annihilation of the world, of Life, of God.

Meditate on that, O anxious disciple, if you want us to tell you more; reflect now on the great wisdom of the incomparable Moses, who commanded the children of Israel to ignore the true name of God.

You, if you have guessed it now, do not abuse it!

Maria de Naglowska, "Satanisme masculin, Satanisme féminin" (1933)

Translation from French: Hans Thomas Hakl and Michele Olzi

People ask me if I present myself before the public as a disciple of P.B.

Randolph, the celebrated American author of *Magia Sexualis*.[60] Several occultists do. Here is my precise answer to this question: No, I am not a disciple of Randolph, for I am announcing a new religion in the world, whose revelation was given to me (not by a human mouth, nor by books) at Rome, at the exact moment when the cardinals meeting at the Vatican received from a *Celestial Messenger* the inspiration for the election of the present Pope. I've already recounted that in one of the numbers of the earlier series of *La Flèche*. This revelation, which I translated into human words in my recent volume *La Lumière du Sexe*, is not formally in contradiction with certain principles and procedures revealed in *Magia Sexualis*, but the light that guides me is not that which guided Randolph. I ask my contradictors to please remember this point, because its importance is enormous. While Randolph, still bathing himself in Hindu idolatry, believes, as theosophists of all nuances do, in the independent and individual life and evolution of each soul particle—a concept that leads in the last analysis to a dreadful reinforcement of the spiritual egotism of men and women—I rise up with all my energy, because such is the divine teaching that has been given to me, against this disastrous idea, erroneous and generating all the evils of humankind. I say, and I ask that one take note, that nothing is person or individual, *either on earth, or in the heavens, or in the waters under the earth* (may those, who have ears hear!) I say: nothing is opposite to me, and I am not opposite to anything, or to anybody separate from you, and no thing, no being, celestial or terrestrial is opposite to you. We are not going toward Unity, we are Unity and have been since the beginning, which never happened. The idea of the separation of the self-styled particles of the Universe is an illusion of masculine Satanism, and P. B. Randolph, just as all theosophists, all Catholic theologians, all Jewish rabbis, and all educated people in general, supports, as is just, a kind of masculine Satanism. The head of the male, Reason, belongs to Satan, as we have said. It is masculine Satanism that pushes away direct divine revelation and passes through the sieve of negating examination every truth spontaneously shining forth from the life force. Masculine Satanism creates separation because it is separation, but its creation is fallacious. It is the No that opposes the Yes, and it dies without ceasing, for it is deprived of life. Meanwhile it is necessary, for it is the ferment that hosts life and without the struggle Life would not be. Since the beginning, which never was, the Elohim, the Yes and the No, have opposed Heaven and Earth, confirming thus the principle of contrasts, which

is the essential and profound basis of what is, of the Unique, which is and which we are. Until the end, which will never come, the Elohim, the Yes and the No, will continue their great solitary combat, their universal combat, which is translated everywhere and which forms everything. Consequently, error will subsist and illusion and death will not cease. Masculine Satanism is immortal. It is immortal in the heavens, it is immortal on earth, it is immortal in waters, under the earth. If the death that it generates stopped, Life would cease. Now Life cannot die. And because Life is, Death persists. Open your ears, serious and puffed-up-with-pride occultists, and try to understand this truth . . .

But in Satan there is also the feminine side. This is quiet most of the time, because since the Beginning words have been taken away from it. Sometimes God lets it speak, but only at the times when the suffering becomes too great, and then it is the song of the Swan. A time finishes then, and another time begins, just because feminine Satanism has expressed itself. Feminine Satanism is the principle of the new Birth, and its cry of joy announces the new Day. The Word is born then in the chaste womb of the woman; it rises to her head and speaks through her mouth, determining the beginning of a new Era. Feminine Satanism generally keeps quiet, because it is the Guardian of the Threshold, the silent Guardian that opposes the solar phallus to prevent fecundation. It is its assignment to oppose fertilisation, the joy of the Sun, because without this opposition, Life would not be. But when the suffering becomes too great and the test is too widespread, bending bodies that are too weak, the Guardian of the Threshold, Woman-Satan, Divine-Mother-Satan, pronounces her word. Then everything changes in the heavens and on the earth and in the waters under the earth, and during a sublime instant, the separation no longer exists, the man and the woman are not more than a single thing, the two contraries are dissolved into a single One, the cry of joy resounds, salvation arrives and Life triumphs . . .

We know that the following promise has been given to the Just: *the woman will crush the head of the malefic Serpent at the appointed hour*. Now, this is what I do. I crush the head of the Serpent, masculine Satanism, and I proclaim the triumph of the Solar Shaft in the mouth of feminine Satanism. There you have the difference between my teaching and that of Randolph, all of the theosophists, all of the theologians, and all of the rabbis. I proclaim the triumph of Life, because of the joy of the Guardian of the Threshold. This joy is spiritual, for it comes from the transformation of the waters of hell into

streams of heaven.

And now, may the learnt director of *L'Astrosophie* of Carthage reread me. May the venerable bishop of the Gnostic Church at Lyon, who asks if my teaching is traditional, reread me. May the occultist-booksellers who refuse my book in their shops, reread me. May the shameless sexologists, who preach the dissoluteness of women, repent. May the doctors who understand nothing about it, but who engage in sexual philosophy just the same, blush in shame, for they are committing the sin against the Spirit, the only one which will not pardoned, for they prevent all understanding of truth and cast humankind into mortal debauchery. They would do well to be silent, for Truth shines forth and will confound them soon . . .

Today is the brief instant of the triumph of Truth. Hasten if you wish to enjoy it. When the instant has passed, the lie will return, the lie of the comments. Then it will be too late. The elect, those who will have merited it, will enter into the new Temple, and the others will be crushed under the ruins of the collapsed houses.

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[1] According to the dossier on Naglowska's aunt, Elena Megeninoff, which can be found at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato, under "Affari Generali e Riservati" in Rome, as recorded in the *Dizionario Biografico dell'immigrazione russa in Italia* (Biographical Dictionary of Russian Immigration in Italy) at the website www.russinitalia.it.

[2] The general of Polish origins Dmitry Stanislavovi Naglovsky (or Дмитрий Станиславович Нагловский, 1838–1890), who assisted GeneralIosif *Gurko in the Russo-Turkish War*. On Maria de Naglowska's life, see M. Olzi, "Per una storia dell'Amore Magico, uno studio bio-bibliografico su Maria de Naglowska (1883–1936)," in *Octagon: The Quest for Wholeness Mirrored in a Library Dedicated to Religious Studies, Philosophy and Esotericism in Particular*, ed. Hans Thomas Hakl (Gaggenau: Scientia Nova, 2015–2016).

[3] Moshe (Moïse) Hopenko (or Моше Дов Хопенко, 1880–1949) was a composer of Jewish origins, director, and founder of the Ron Shulamit Conservatory in Jaffa (currently located in Jerusalem). See ibid., pp. 10–13.

[4] This is confirmed by the publication of a grammar handbook for teaching French to Russian refugees, M. de Naglowska, *Nouvelle Grammaire de la langue française* (Genève: Eggimann, 1912).

[5] The official biography by a former follower of Naglowska, Marc Pluquet, reports that Hopenko was a friend of Theodor Herzl (1860–1904), one of the two founders of the Zionist movement; see M. Pluquet, *La Sophiale—Maria de Naglowska, Sa vie, Sa oeuvre* (Paris: Ordo Templi Orientis, 1993) p. 4.

[6] It was the *La Paix et son principal obstacle* conference, which took place at the lecture hall of the University of Geneva in 1918.

[7] In particular, she took part in the efforts to spread the Dadaist movement in Italy. For Naglowska's active involvement in Italian Dadaist movement see M. Olzi, "Dada 1921: Un'ottima annata," *la*

Biblioteca di Via Senato, no. 1 (2016) pp. 21–25. For a contextualisation of Dadaist activities in Italy, see G. Lista, "Dada in Italia," in *Dada: L'Arte della negazione* (De Luca: Roma, 1994) pp. 109–132.

[8] For the relationship between Giulio Cesare Andrea Evola (known as Julius, 1898–1974) and Maria de Naglowska see the contribution of Hans Thomas Hakl, "Alcune presenze femminili nella vita di Julius Evola," *La Cittadella*, no. 34 (2008) pp. 38–47; for the collaboration between the two in the "Primavera dadaista" period in Italy, see M. Olzi, "Per una storia dell'Amore Magico, uno studio bio-bibliografico su Maria de Naglowska (1883–1936)," pp. 23–25; M. Olzi, "Dada 1921: Un'ottima annata," pp. 24–25.

[9] M. Pluquet, *La Sophiale—Maria de Naglowska, Sa vie, Sa oeuvre*, p. 5.

[10] She was also a renowned participator among those attending the circles of Montparnasse with the name *La Sophiale*.

[11] The latter was located at no. 36 of rue Vavin.

[12] M. Introvigne, *Satanism: A Social History* (Brill: Leiden, 2016) p. 15; for the chapter dedicated to Naglowska See pp. 265–277.

[13] W. Hanegraaff, *Western Esotericism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Bloomsbury: London, 2013) pp. 7, 119–142.

[14] See M. Pasi, "The Modernity of Occultism: Reflections on Some Crucial Aspects," in *Hermes in Academy: Ten Years' Study of Western Esotericism at the University of Amsterdam*, ed. W. Hanegraaff and J. Pijnenburg (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009) pp. 64–65.

[15] For information regarding the *Slavophile* influence on this character's "construction" and the writing of Maria de Naglowska see M. Olzi, "*From Russia with Love*, a Case of Russian Culture and Immigration in Western Esotericism: Maria de Naglowska (1883–1936)," paper presented at CEENASWE conference, *Western Esotericism in East-Central Europe over the Centuries*, held at the Central European University di Budapest, July 4–5, 2014.

[16] Note that Maria de Naglowka translated the book of the "Rosicrucian" P. B. Randolph, *Magia Sexualis* (Paris: Robert Télin chez Au Lys Rouge, 1931). For a general outline of the rituals of the same "Confrerie des Chevaliers la Flèche d'or" group, see H. T. Hakl, "The Theory and Practice of Sexual Magic Exemplified in Four Magical Groups in the Early Twentieth Century," in *Hidden Intercourse: Eros and Sexuality in the History of Western Esotericism* (Leiden: BRILL, 2008) pp. 465–478.

[17] For an introduction to the initiatory levels of the group See Hakl, "The Theory and Practice of Sexual Magic," pp. 472–473, M. Introvigne, *Satanism: A Social History*, pp. 264–265.

[18] Just as the meeting locations pragmatically adapted for such purpose, see M. Olzi, "Per una storia dell'Amore Magico, uno studio bio-bibliografico su Maria de Naglowska (1883–1936)," p. 16.

[19] M. de Naglowska, *La Lumière du sexe—rituel d'initiation satanique selon la doctrine du Troisième Terme de la Trinité* (Paris: Éditions de la Flèche, 1932) p. 139.

[20] See "La Doctrine du Troisième Terme de la Trinité et 'La Lumière du Sex,' " *La Flèche*, no. 14 (October–November 1932) pp. 1, 4.

[21] If one of course does not count the translations of P. B. Randolph, *Magia Sexualis*, and, going further back, in the work of A. Simanovich, *Raspoutine* (Paris: Gallimard, 1930).

[22] In March of the same year (1932), the same publisher issued a supplement to Naglowska's newspaper, *Le Rite Sacré de l'Amour Magique—Aveu 26.1*, which was an initiatory novel (suspected of having autobiographical elements) that appeared as a serial in the periodical.

[23] It has been hypothesized that some of the texts advertised in *La Flèche* (which up to now have not been found) were the first drafts of what would eventually become her following publications. An example would be in *La Flèche*, no. 5 (February 1931) p. 5: "Nous poublierons: 1) Le Troisième Terme de la Trinité, doctrine; 2) Les nouveaux Rites du ternaire; 3) Le Temple de la Vie—par Maria de Naglowska."

[24] See the bibliography.

[25] Such as Madeleine Pelletier (1874–1939). A doctor, as well as an initiate of the Scottish Grand Lodge of Symbolic Masonry, she was renowned during the times of militant first-wave feminism. The Club du Faubourg, led by the journalist Léo Poldès (pseudonym of Léopold Szeszler, 1891–1970), must have held a number of conferences; among the organizers we find both the names of Pelletier and de Naglowska.

[26] In this case we refer to the entire editorial committee of *La Revue Internationale des Sociétés Secrétes*, directed by Monsignor Ernest Jouin (1844–1932), who makes more than one review on *Flèche* and its director.

[27] In both the case of the Taxil affair and the memoirs of a certain Clotilde Bersone, which were published anonymously with the title of *L'Élue du Dragon* (Paris: Les Etincelles, 1929), see M. Introvigne, *Satanism: A Social History*, pp. 161–192; 210–228.

[28] In the original edition (and following publications) another chapter was added, consisting of a preview of the next book, namely *Le Mystère de la pendaison—initiation satanique selon la doctrine du Troisième Terme de la Trinité* (Paris: Éditions de la Flèche, 1934).

[29] See S. Alexandrian, "Maria de Naglowska et le Satanisme feminine," in Alexandrian, *Les Libérateurs de l'Amour* (Paris: Seuil, 1977) p. 190.

[30] See the bibliography.

[31] M. de Naglowska, *La Lumière du sexe—rituel d'initiation satanique selon la doctrine du Troisième Terme de la Trinité*, p. 12.

[32] M. de Naglowska, *La Lumière du sexe—rituel d'initiation satanique selon la doctrine du Troisième Terme de la Trinité*, p. 11.

[33] M. de Naglowska, *La Lumière du sexe—rituel d'initiation satanique selon la doctrine du Troisième Terme de la Trinité*, p. 37.

[34] M. de Naglowska, *La Lumière du sexe*, pp. 29–39

[35] M. de Naglowska, *La Lumière du sexe*, p. 52; *Le Mystère de la pendaison—initiation satanique selon la doctrine du Troisième Terme de la Trinité* will be the third and last work of Maria de Naglowska.

[36] For further information on the lives of Naglowska's disciples and their relationship with her, see Ibid., pp. 19–20; S. Alexandrian, "Maria de Naglowska prophétesse de la Religion du troisième millénaire," *Supérieur Inconnu*, no. 8 (October–December 1997) pp. 10–22.

[37] Sarane Alexandrian (1927–2009) was a Surrealist writer and the secretary of André Breton. For more on the life of Alexandrian, see his autobiographical account: S. Alexandrian, *L'Aventure en soi* (Paris: Mercurede France, 1990) and the official biography written by his friend and colleague Christophe Dauphin, *Sarane Alexandrian—ou Le grand défi de l'imaginaire* (Lausanne: Age d'Homme, 2006).

[38] M. Olzi, "*From Russia with Love*, a Case of Russian Culture and Immigration in Western Esotericism: Maria de Naglowska (1883–1936)."

[39] *La Flèche* runned between October 15, 1930, and January 15, 1935, for a total of twenty issues.

[40] See "Avis à nos abonnés, à nos amis et a nos lecteurs," *La Flèche*, nos. 6, 15 (March 1931) p. 7.

[41] On how Naglowska's translation of Randolph's work could be a forged assortment of texts instead of a mere translation, see J. P. Deveney, *Paschal Beverly Randolph: A Nineteenth Century American Spiritualist, Rosicrucian and Sex Magician*, (Albany: SUNY, 1997) pp. 226–228.

[42] B. Anel-Kham (pseud. Henri Meslin), *Théorie et pratique de la Magie Sexuelle—L'amour et l'occultisme* (Paris: Librairie Astra, 1938) p. 43.

[43] The abbreviation Naglowska used to refer to the *Troisième Terme de la Trinité*.

[44] See *La Flèche*, no. 15 (February 1933) pp. 9–10.

[45] *La Flèche*, no. 15 (February 1933) p. 19.

[46] See the introduction, under the section entitled "Origin" of *La Lumière du Sexe*.

[47] *La Flèche*, no. 15 (February 1933) p. 18–19.

[48] *La Flèche*, no. 15 (February 1933) p. 22.

[49] *La Flèche*, no. 15 (February 1933) p. 22.

[50] *La Flèche*, no. 15 (February 1933) p. 22.

[51] *La Flèche*, no. 15 (February 1933) p. 22.

[52] See the second half of the text.

[53] M. de Naglowska, *La Lumière du sexe—rituel d'initiation satanique selon la doctrine du Troisième Terme de la Trinité*, pp. 58–59.

[54] For further elaboration on the topic of Satan as the liberator of women, *see* P. Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism: Lucifer as the Liberator of Woman in Nineteenth-Century Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University press, 2017).

[55] See "Audience" in the preceding section.

[56] The hypothesis is that no more than three-hundred copies of the newspapers were printed. Today the paper format of the periodical remains one of the rarest in the book trade.

[57] We can certainly count other initiatory groups among these. As in the case of the theologian and Anglican priest Francis Rolt Wheeler (1876–1960) and the bishop of the Gnostic Church of Lyon Joanny Bricaud (1881–1934), with whom Naglowska has a lively debate in the article on Satanism, See *La Flèche*, no. 15 (February 1933) p. 21. Some scholars from the field of new religions also took an interest. The most blatant example is that of Pierre Geyraud, pseudonym of the former Trappist monk Raoul Guyader, and the writer René Thimmy. Both authors reproduce an interview of Madame de Naglowska (in Thimmy's work Naglowska's identity is veiled by the pseudonym "Vera de Petrouchka"). The two interviews have common elements, and both report the relationship/initiation with Rasputin *See* P. Geyraud, *Les petites églises de Paris* (Paris: Émile-Paul Frères, 1937) pp. 144–153; R. Thimmy, *La Magie à Paris* (Paris: Éditions de France, 1934) pp. 71–91.

[58] The republication of Naglowska's life work, carried out by the French branch of the *O.T.O.*, is the most obvious example of this initiatory association's interest in the Russian author. Another case, however, is the article by Fr. Marcion, "Introduction à l'oeuvre de Maria de Naglowska," *Thelema* 7:27 (April 1992) pp. 18–20. To see how Naglowska's work has been translated and re-evaluated in other countries see the Italian translations by Vittorio Fincati (ed.), *Il rito sacro dell'amore magico* (Milan: Primordia, 1996); *Satanismo Femminista* (Milano: Primordia, 1999); *Maria de Naglowska e il Satanismo Femminile—con la traduzione di alcuni testi della Scrittrice Esoterica Russa* (Vicenza: Privata-Mente, 2015); in English by Donald Traxler (ed.), *The Light of Sex: Initiation, Magic and Sacrament* (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 2011); *Advanced Sex Magic: The Hanging Mystery Initiation* (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 2011); *The Sacred Rite of Magical Love—A Ceremony of Word and Flesh*, (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 2012); *Magia Sexualis: Sexual Practices for Magical Power* (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 2012).

[59] Maria De Naglowska, *La Lumière du sexe—rituel d'initiation satanique selon la doctrine du Troisième Terme de la Trinité* (Paris: Éditions de la Flèche, 1932) pp. 35–39.

[60] Maria De Naglowska, "Satanisme masculin, Satanisme féminin," *La Flèche Organe d'Action Magique*, no. 16 (1933) pp. 20–24.

10

Aleister Crowley, "Hymn to Lucifer" (Undated) and *The Book of Thoth* (1944)

Johan Nilsson

Aleister Crowley—born Edward Alexander Crowley in Warwickshire, England**,** in 1875—was raised in a wealthy family with a background in the evangelical movement of the Plymouth Brethren. Crowley developed literary ambitions during his time at Cambridge and tried for much of his life to gain recognition as a poet and a writer.[1] He travelled widely and participated in some ambitious early twentieth-century mountain-climbing expeditions, for example an attempt to climb K2 in 1902. As a young man Crowley became a member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, an initiatory occult society that included among its membership the future Nobel laureate W. B. Yeats (1865–1939). Crowley broke with the movement after a comparatively short time but was heavily influenced by its special brand of esotericism. Beginning in the first decade of the twentieth century, Crowley created a new religion, Thelema, which owed much to Golden Dawn–style esotericism but was centered on the divine revelation he claimed to have received in Cairo in 1904. Crowley's travels took him to Asia and North Africa, and he shared with many of his contemporaries a strong interest in non-European, especially Asian, religious traditions.[2]

Crowley's worldview exemplifies some of the tendencies that Wouter Hanegraaff has associated with the modernization of esotericism.[3] It is to a certain extent characterized by Kabbalistic and neo-platonic thought, where the universe is understood as an emanation of the divine and the cosmos is regarded as a living entity permeated by a complex net of correspondences connecting the world of the senses with the divine. At the same time Crowley's religious thought was influenced by the developing academic discipline of comparative religion, the modern European interest in Asian cultures, and the obsession with the possibility of creating a "scientific religion" that increasingly came to typify a major part of Esotericism and related movements during the nineteenth century.[4]

Within this frame of thought Crowley tried to give a new significance to

religious practices with roots in early modern European esotericism, the so-called occult sciences, primarily ritual magic. He conflated these with practices disembedded from Asian religious traditions, for example Hindu yoga and divination based on the Chinese *Yî jīng*.[5]

As founder and prophet of a religious movement organized around a divinely revealed text, *The Book of the Law* (written 1904, published 1909), Crowley is to a certain extent atypical of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century esotericism. Some parallels can be found, however, in the importance placed on revelation in a broader heterodox religious environment during this time, for example the role of messages from elevated spiritual beings within Spiritualism and Theosophy.

Crowley cannot be regarded as a Satanist in any meaningful way, and the Devil plays only a minor role in his religious thinking.[6] Furthermore, Crowley never presented a completely coherent articulation of his understanding of Satan, and the diabolical figures that can be found in his writings are given partly different interpretations and significance depending on context. There are, however, recurring motifs in Crowley's depiction of said diabolical figures, and his understanding of them is often (but not always) based on positive reinterpretations of the Devil. As other chapters in this volume demonstrate, such reinterpretations were not unheard of in late nineteenth-[-] and early twentieth-century occultism,[7] and should probably be seen as based on two main sources: (1) the occult reception of motifs taken from Romantic Satanism, the literary tendency or fashion that emerged in the late eighteenth century and was associated with writers like P. B. Shelley (1792–1822) and Lord Byron (1788–1824), and (2) comparativist interpretations of religion, based in part on the perennialism of older forms of esotericism, and in part on occultist appropriation of approaches from the nineteenth-century academic study of religion.[8]

Two of the most important motifs in Crowley's depiction of the Devil—the notion that he[9] is connected to a creative force in nature, and that he is related to the liberation and apotheosis of humanity—can be said to be related to the influence of Romantic Satanism.[10] Two further ideas, on the other hand, namely that the Devil is the expression of a universal principle (which has manifested itself in the guise of gods and mythological figures in many different cultures) and that he is connected to the sun, are in turn probably based on occultism's taste for comparative religion. All Crowley's portrayals

of the Devil, moreover, necessarily depend on the claim that he has been misunderstood by theologians and earlier representatives of mainstream Christian culture. To the extent that his worldview took a practical and organized form, Crowley's esotericism was foremost connected to two small initiatory societies called the Ordo Templi Orientis and the AA.[11] The Devil plays no major role in either of these organizations.

The two texts that have been chosen as examples of Crowley's views of the Devil represent different genres, and to some extent they also emphasize different aspects of the Crowleyan discourse on the Satanic. The texts in question are an extract from *The Book of Thoth* (1944) dealing with the tarot card The Devil, and the undated poem "Hymn to Lucifer."

Hymn to Lucifer (Undated)

Origin

"The Hymn to Lucifer" was first published posthumously. There is an edition from 1970 by filmmaker and occultist Kenneth Anger's (b. 1927) Dove Press, which is likely the first. It later appeared in the magazine *Earth Religion News* in 1974 and in *Equinox* 3:10 (New York, 1986).

Content

Even though the expression Romantic Satanism has been used mostly by historians of literature, it can be regarded as a broader phenomenon and understood as a set of attitudes and literary motifs grouped around the trope of the Devil as a righteous revolutionary. This sympathetic or ambivalent reworking of the Devil, and the cluster of motifs and narratives it was associated with, was first articulated in Romantic poetry but soon spread to other genres, like political tracts and historical monographs.[12] Understood in this way, Romantic Satanism is not so much a movement or an ideology,[13] but a collection of literary themes that emerged in the late eighteenth century and has survived, although transformed, to the present day.[14]

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, motifs related to Romantic Satanism started to spread within the occult milieu. In combination with other ways of reinterpreting the biblical Devil, such motifs influenced representatives of several occult movements while they at the same time

remained popular with artists and political activists. A clear example of the occult reception of Romantic Satanism can be found in the works of Aleister Crowley. A devoted reader of John Milton (1608–1674) and the romantic poets (especially Shelley),[15] he regarded Milton's Satan as the true hero of *Paradise Lost*—just like many romantics had done.[16] In his autobiography he describes how he, as a young man, sympathized with the Miltonian Devil and viewed him as a representative of a "spiritual warfare [. . .] against the oppressors of the human soul."[17] In addition, he relates his disappointment in discovering that the magical literature—which he turned to in hope of finding moral allies in his adolescent revolt against the strictures of his upbringing in the Plymouth brethren—lacked a similarly heroic and impressive Satanic figure.[18]

Even though it is rare for Crowley to explicitly refer to the romantic poets' positive interpretation of the Devil, it is clear that he was influenced by a romantic reading of Satan and the biblical narratives often associated with the Devil. He also unmistakably shared many of the values and sympathies on which such readings were based. One example is his positive appreciation of the serpent in the story of the Garden of Eden and the Tree of Knowledge.

The serpent in the narrative of the Garden of Eden had in earlier articulations of Romantic Satanism often been associated with knowledge in general, and was related to the figure of Lucifer portrayed as the bringer of light, giving the character an association with Enlightenment values. In the writings of Crowley and other representatives of occultism, however, the knowledge offered by the serpent came to signify *gnosis*: secret or esoteric knowledge. Crowley was a part of this shift of focus, but at the same time he preserved the older Enlightenment association and used the link between knowledge and the Devil to construct a conflict between science and Christianity. He understood the antagonists as part of a cosmic conflict where the church was an oppressive force limiting the potential of humanity, thus in some ways echoing Jules Michelet (1798–1874, see the chapter on Michelet in the present volume).[19] As in older examples of Romantic Satanism,[20] the revolt of the Devil and the defiance of the serpent in Genesis 3 were linked to historical and political struggles.[21]

In his understanding of the Devil, Crowley thus assimilated older motifs that were well established in the discourse of Romantic Satanism. At the same time, he, and other representatives of the occult milieu, incorporated

these motifs in an occult framework, something that signified subtle shifts in their meaning, for example, the association of the Edenic serpent with esoteric knowledge. Crowley also radicalized the comparatively mild romantic criticism of Christianity and the Christian god. Criticism that had been cautious and ambivalent when articulated by figures such as Blake or Byron became uncompromising and relentless in the writings of Crowley.[22]

”Hymn to Lucifer” alludes to the state of humankind in the Garden of Eden before the Fall, a condition that is described in negative terms and portrayed as restrictive and stagnant, “an inane and pointless path” where humanity’s “noble element/of fire in nature” is unknown. This negative condition is challenged when Lucifer approaches “Eden’s imbecile perimeter” and breathes “life into the sterile universe.”

Although this is not explicitly stated, the poem implies that Lucifer is connected to the serpent and that the motifs of knowledge and rebellion are linked together. Even if it happens at the price of death, the Devil represents the possibility for humankind to leave the stagnation of Eden.

The view of the Devil, especially in the guise of Lucifer, as the revealer of knowledge has been regarded as one of the classical elements of Romantic Satanism, even though it could be argued that it was subordinate to the motif of the righteous revolutionary. As we have seen, when the motif was picked up by representatives of the occult environment of the late nineteenth century, the knowledge the serpent promised Eve came to be associated with esoteric, or at least soteriologically, valuable (i.e., related to spiritual salvation) knowledge of some kind. What was probably the most influential example of the esoterization of the serpent of Genesis can be found in H. P. Blavatsky’s treatment of the subject in *The Secret Doctrine* (see also the separate chapter in the present volume). Here Blavatsky claims that Satan (in this context associated with the serpent) should be regarded as a Savior, teaching “spiritual wisdom” and freeing mankind from a state of stagnation. “This ever active Energy protesting against Static Inertia—the principle to which Self-assertion is a crime, and Thought and the Light of Knowledge odious.”[23] Although not explicitly mentioning the story of the Fall, Carl William Hansen (see separate chapter in the present volume) articulated similar ideas when he wrote of serpents as associated with *gnosis* in the context of his Luciferian pamphlet *Den ny morgens gry* (1906).

As we have seen, this interpretation of the image of the Devil, the serpent, and esoteric knowledge was part of a broader occult reinvention of the

narrative of Genesis, but it also fit nicely with Crowley's Thelemic ideology. Although the occult reception of this particular element of Romantic Satanism, with the serpent as a revealer of esoteric knowledge, is not explicitly present in "Hymn to Lucifer," it was emphasized by Crowley in other writings.

Crowley was apparently fond of the romantic reading of the narrative of Genesis and inclined to sympathize with the serpent. "I am of the Serpent's party; Knowledge is good, be the price what it may," he proclaimed in "The Psychology of Hashish."[24] The serpent was not always a positive symbol to him, however, although it was often associated with knowledge, *gnosis*, or "the magical force in man."[25] The tendency to associate the serpent and its promise to make gods of Adam and Eve with initiation and magic was particularly strong in Crowley's writings.[26] This reading of Genesis was clearly reinforced by the early Western reception of Indic yoga, where the serpent *kundalini* that is said to dwell inside each human being is associated with magical powers as well as salvific *gnosis*. Crowley explicitly connected the *kundalini* with the serpent of Genesis, as did other writers on yoga in this period.[27]

Even the positive value given to death in "Hymn to Lucifer" ties the poem to Thelemic ideology. In Crowley's writings death is often described as an occasion to be celebrated and the fear of death as something to be overcome.[28] Death is often said to represent learning and development in contrast to states of being that have become stagnant and static.[29] When Crowley discusses the significance of sin and sinfulness in relation to his own religious system, he argues, for example, that "[s]in is restriction, that is, it is 'being' as opposed to 'becoming'. The fundamental idea of wrong is the static as opposed to the dynamic conception of the Universe."[30] In the context of Thelemic soteriology, then, the narrative of Adam and Eve in Eden could be interpreted as the ultimate representation of stagnation. Death, and to a certain degree suffering in general, becomes the liberation won by the just rebellion of Lucifer.

Crowley, thus, appropriated a motif that was well established within romantic poetry as well as feminist and anarchist political writing in the nineteenth century and tied it to his own religious worldview. In this way the appearance of such motifs in the writings of Crowley become one of the clearest examples of the adaptation of Romantic Satanism to the occult milieu

of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Genre and Audience

A significant portion of Crowley's literary production consists of poetry; this is especially true of his early work. Even though he became more active in other genres later in life, Crowley continued to publish verse until his last years when he was working on a collection of poems titled *Olla*.[31] Crowley's self-understanding as a poet was important to him and is a recurring theme in his autobiography and other writings.[32] It also constituted a major part of his public persona.

Although his poetry was to a large extent written in the style of nineteenth-century writers like Algernon Swinburne (1837–1909) or Shelley, whom Crowley admired, and did not always contain explicit allusions to his religious worldview, Crowley's lyrical work cannot be separated from his occult preoccupations. In fact, there was a widespread tendency in the occult milieu at the turn of the century to sacralize art; perhaps the best example was the French author and Rosicrucian Josephin Péladan (1859–1918), who organized an ambitious movement around the idea of a spiritual, anti-materialist art, aggressively heckling Émile Zola (1840–1902) and the naturalist school.[33]

Though far from the radical standpoint of Péladan, Crowley did in fact share some of the assumptions, values, and rhetoric of other representatives of the esoteric cult of the artist.[34] He shared the tendency to conflate art and religion on which such projects were built. This is apparent, for example, in the definition of poetry (that can be found in his autobiography) according to which "[a] poem is a series of words so arranged that the combination of meaning, rhythm and rime produces the definitely magical effect of exalting the soul to divine ecstasy."[35]

Even though a poem such as "Hymn to Lucifer" can be read without any particular insights into Crowley's worldview, perhaps as a late reworking of motifs from the writings of Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867) or the romantic poets, it can also be understood as a rhetorical expression of Thelemic ideology.[36]

Reception and Influence

“Hymn to Lucifer” is a good example of Crowley’s extensive impact on twentieth-century popular and avant-garde culture. The poem has had a wide influence since it was first posthumously published in the 1970s, and references to it can be found in a variety of mediums and genres, from cinema and music to Left-hand Path texts.

“Hymn to Lucifer” inspired avant-garde filmmaker Kenneth Anger’s (mentioned above) *Lucifer Rising* (1972/1980), an experimental short that included a performance by Marianne Faithful (b. 1946), and music by Charles Manson associate Robert “Bobby” Beausoleil (b. 1947).[37] From the 1990s onward the poem has been set to music by a surprisingly extensive variety of musicians (especially, but not exclusively, from different genres of metal). Some examples include Coph Nia’s “Hymn to Lucifer,” as well as songs by the same name recorded by Portuguese metal band Daemonarch (1998) and Maltese Death Metal act Abysmal Torment (2014).[38]

“Hymn to Lucifer” is also cited in works[39] related to the Left-hand Path milieu in contemporary occultism, indicating that Crowley’s portrayal of Lucifer in some instances has been taken up as a symbol of religious (or broader ideological) identity, and not only as a compelling artistic motif.[40] Beyond the history of the reception of Crowley’s poem, it can be noted that the motif of the serpent as the revealer of liberating knowledge became an established element in texts of several occult (or occult-inspired) organizations during the twentieth century, especially within the Satanic and Left-and Path milieus of the 1960s onward.[41] The history of the motif thus more or less parallels the intellectual history of Satanism (or at least one such history), extending from a literary convention favored by romantic poets and revolutionaries, and a narrative of esoteric wisdom and anti-clerical critique in the occult revival, to a symbol of religious identity in twentieth-century new religious movements that self-identify as adherents of Satanism or Left-hand Path occultism.

The Book of Thoth (1944)

Origin

Crowley worked on *The Book of Thoth* between 1938 and 1944, when the book was finally published. In the end it was printed in a small edition of two

hundred copies. At the same time, a tarot deck painted by Lady Frieda Harris (1877–1962) according to Crowley's instructions was issued.[42]

Content

Since the eighteenth century, speculations on the tarot cards have been a reoccurring feature in writings related to esotericism. Originally ordinary playing cards with roots in early modern Italy, the tarot was not regarded as having anything more to do with divination or other occult practices than any other deck of cards until the end of the eighteenth century. This changed with the French writer and philosopher Antoine Court de Gébelin (1725–1784), who believed himself to have discovered that the tarot was in fact an allegorical expression of the secret wisdom of the ancient Egyptians.[43]

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the cards gained in popularity within the occult milieu. Eliphas Lévi (Alphonse Louis Constant, 1810–1875, see separate chapter in the present volume) discussed them in *Dogme et rituel de la Haute Magie* ("Dogma and Ritual of the High Magic," 1856), and several late nineteenth-century French occultists took a keen interest in the cards.[44] Some persons from this milieu, Papus (Gérard Encausse, 1865–1916) and Oswald Wirth (1860–1943) perhaps foremost among them, published writings where the tarot was related to an occult or esoteric worldview.[45] The interest in the cards within organized esotericism, however, has perhaps not primarily been related to their usefulness as divinatory tools. Since the cards have been understood to represent the fundamental principles of the universe, discourse on the tarot has often worked as a point of departure for discussions of esoteric cosmology and cosmogony, with books on the tarot often taking on a generally didactic character that can take the text far away from any mere description of divinatory techniques. This is very much the case with Aleister Crowley's *The Book of Thoth.*

Crowley's interest in the tarot had primarily two influences; the role that the cards played within the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and the one that they were given in the writings of Eliphas Lévi. Crowley, however, was also an innovator that made considerable changes in the interpretation of the cards and the organization of the deck in relation to his sources.[46] Crowley's intention seems originally to have been a less ambitious project limited to the manufacturing—with the help of Lady Harris—of a tarot deck that was more

or less identical to the traditional deck he had described in *The Equinox* 1:8 (1912).[47] This deck also followed the design given to the tarot in the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. The project was expanded when Crowley decided to revise the deck and adjust it to his own religious system and understanding of esoteric correspondences. The result was a revised tarot deck and a book, *The Book of Thoth*, which presented and explained the cards.[48]

The Book of Thoth is a manual designed to give an account of Crowley's interpretation of the significance of the tarot deck as well as to instruct its readers in a divinatory use of the cards. As has been pointed out above, however, it is also a more general discourse on Crowley's worldview on several important levels. This broader tendency is connected to the discussion of the tarot deck partly through his attempt to describe and explain a world where tarot divination is possible and meaningful, but also through his ambition to describe and legitimate the changes that had been made in the design of the deck. Finally, the presentation of each individual card and the principles and forces these are said to represent give Crowley an opportunity to touch upon specific details and themes in his more general worldview. The discussion of the Devil in connection with the description of the fifteenth[49] trump card[50] that interests us here is an example of this, and in many ways this description constitutes a summary of several recurring motifs connected with the role of the Devil in Crowley's writings.

A card with the title "The Devil" can, as a rule, be found in most tarot decks. In regard to Crowley's main sources, such a card exists in Lévi's writings as well as in the tarot of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. A Devil card is also a part of other influential decks, for example the one described by Papus in *Le Tarot des bohémiens* ("The Tarot of the Bohemians," 1889). Crowley, however, lets the description and interpretation of the card become an analysis of the role ascribed to the Devil in his worldview in general. Considering that *The Book of Thoth* was published toward the end of Crowley's life, this text takes on the character of a summary of arguments and viewpoints from his earlier writings.

The Book of Thoth is divided in four parts. The first of these parts deals with theory, and the remaining three deal with the individual cards of the deck, the keys or trumps, the court cards and the small cards. In addition, the book contains two appendices dealing with practical issues related to tarot divination and correspondences. The card titled "The Devil" is discussed in

the second part of the book.

As a consequence of the framework, each card is presented in a loose but formalized way, and the texts dealing with the cards are often structured after a simple outline. For example, in the part of the book dealing with the trumps the texts frequently begin by stating that the card in question is said to correspond to a specific Hebrew letter or a sign of the zodiac. Crowley employs several different interpretative strategies and types of reasoning when he presents his arguments for his interpretation of the card, and by extension for the nature of the Devil. Some of these are purely esoteric (astrological, Kabbalistic, or employing other correspondence-based lines of reasoning) and some are primarily based on historical or etymological arguments.[51]

Occult discourse was to a certain extent shaped by the academic study of religion during the nineteenth century.[52] Scholars of religion did not only contribute a large amount of information that was absorbed by occultism; they seem also to have facilitated the spread of certain approaches and theories that became popular in the occult milieu, among them comparative, evolutionary, and linguistic approaches to religion. In occult discourse, however, such approaches tended to merge and become entangled with esoteric epistemologies of various kinds.

It is not easy on every occasion to know when Crowley employs a historical line of reasoning as opposed to an argument based on esoteric correspondences. When, for example, he states that there is a connection between the Greek god Pan and the Devil, it is difficult to discern if he claims that this connection consists of a mystic correspondence between these figures, of the same kind that exists between the sun and the metal gold in older esoteric literature, or if it consists of a historical relationship where the Christian Devil through a process of religious change is supposed to have taken on characteristics once associated with Pan.

Through these different strategies Crowley presents a number of arguments that, without exception, can be found in his other writings as well. Of most interest in this context are the following: (1) the Devil has been misunderstood, (2) the Devil is connected to or identical with a creative force in nature, and (3) the creative force, energy, or principle that is represented by the Devil also manifests itself in many different gods or mythological figures in different cultures. Unlike “The Hymn to Lucifer,” however, *The Book of Thoth* does not present the Devil as a bringer of knowledge.

In the beginning of the passage dealing with the card titled “The Devil,” Crowley states that in “the Dark Ages of Christianity” the card was “completely misunderstood.” Immediately following this statement he mentions Eliphas Lévi, which suggests that “the Dark Ages of Christianity” include the nineteenth century and that Crowley probably refers to the period in time before *The Book of the Law* was written in 1904, when the new aeon, the aeon of Horus, was supposed to have begun.[53] That not just the tarot card but also the entity portrayed on it has been misunderstood is of course a completely understandable opinion on Crowley’s part considering the radical reinterpretation of the Devil that he made in his writings. It is also a view that he expressed in many of his books. In *Magick in Theory and Practice* (1930), for example, he argues that the belief that Satan is evil rests on a misunderstanding and claims that this idea originally arose because of the Devil’s association with the burning rays of the sun.[54]

In *The Book of Thoth*, the Devil card is said to represent “creative energy in its most material form,” and the connection that exists among the card, the Devil as a spiritual entity or principle, and the creative force is possibly the main theme of the text. The creative force is described as “all-pervading” and masculine, it is associated with the goat as a symbolic or emblematic form, and the card is claimed to be connected to the zodiac sign Capricorn—“the goat leaping with lust upon the summits of the earth”—and the god Pan as “the All-Begetter.” This connection between the Devil and an omnipresent, masculine creative force is mentioned in other texts by Crowley as well, for example in *Magick in Theory and Practice*, where the Devil is explained to be associated with energy, force, and creative will.[55]

Related to these correspondences is a connection between the Devil and the sun. It too can be found in *Magick in Theory and Practice* and in other of Crowley’s writings.[56] The sun is an exceedingly positive symbol for Crowley; like the Devil it is associated with creativity and with masculine phallic force.[57]

It is possible, even if it is never explicitly stated, that the creative force embodied by the Devil can be interpreted in accordance with Thelemic cosmogony according to which the world has originated from a primal source that divided itself into two complementary but opposed poles striving to re-unite and return to nothingness. This tendency to re-unite is called love by Crowley and is ascribed to every element in the universe. Love, and the

satisfaction of love, implies dissolution and creation at the same time and is described as a universal force sustaining the universe that is in many ways reminiscent of the creative force described in the text.[58] This concept is paralleled in Carl William Hansen's pamphlet *Den ny morgens gry* (1906), where the creative force is associated with Lucifer.[59]

Central to Crowley's theology was the tendency—relatively common in the esotericism of the period—to view divinities and mythological figures from different cultures as variations of certain fundamental universal principles. These principles were often identical with forces that in Crowley's interpretation of older esoteric traditions were connected to the planets or the Kabbalistic sefirot (several gods from different cultures could consequently be said to represent a principle that Crowley then identified with, for example, the planet Mars or with his interpretation of the characteristics traditionally ascribed to this planet in older esoteric texts). The Devil was no exception, and in connection with the discussion of the tarot card, Crowley identifies the Devil with the gods Pan and Baphomet, the idol that the Knights Templar were accused of worshipping and who Crowley believed to be a pagan god. These gods were, he states, reflections of the principles described above, most importantly the creative force related to the sun.[60]

Genre and Audience

At a first glance *The Book of Thoth* is a manual teaching divination through the medium of the tarot cards. The book, however, contains detailed information about elements in Crowley's worldview, and it seems reasonable to assume that beyond teaching the tarot it was meant so serve the broader purpose of popularizing Thelema and winning new proselytes. Internal evidence as well as biographical information supports the interpretation that Crowley intended *The Book of Thoth* to circulate among a wider audience and that he was not merely addressing devout Thelemites or readers with a previous knowledge of the tarot.[61] Support for this interpretation can also be found in Crowley's correspondence.[62] The limited size of the books first edition[63] to some degree conflicts with this interpretation, but should most likely be understood as a consequence of Crowley's unstable financial situation rather than as a conscious attempt to limit his audience.

Reception and Influence

The tarot deck that Lady Harris, following Crowley's instructions, painted in connection with the writing of *The Book of Thoth* has gained some influence and popularity since it was first created. It has been republished several times during the twentieth century and has inspired related books, for example Lon Milo Duquette's *Understanding Aleister Crowley's Thoth Tarot* (2003). The popularity of the Thoth deck, however, does not necessarily reflect a similar popularity for *The Book of Thoth*. Even if this book is conceptually linked to the deck, the book and the cards are usually sold separately.

In most cases the central motifs of Crowley's understanding of the Devil have equivalents in later Satanic discourse. In the movement that began with Anton LaVey's Church of Satan, the carnality of the Devil is often emphasized in a manner that shares certain points of commonality with Crowleyan vitalism. This does not necessarily imply an influence from Crowley or the broader occult milieu, but indicates a relative stability in certain elements of the discourse on the Satanic from Romantic Satanism, through occultism, to the self-identified Satanic movements from the 1960s onward. The same thing could be said of the comparative and universalist tendencies that Crowley exemplified, where the Devil was seen as an expression of a transcultural spiritual principle. Such tendencies, in fact, have made the line that separates late twentieth-century Satanism, occultism, and neo-paganism blurry in some instances.

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Aleister Crowley, *Hymn to Lucifer* (undated)

Ware, nor of good nor ill, what aim hath act?
Without its climax, death, what savour hath
Life? an impeccable machine, exact
He paces an inane and pointless path
To glut brute appetites, his sole content
How tedious were he fit to comprehend
Himself! More, this our noble element
Of fire in nature, love in spirit, unkenned
Life hath no spring, no axle, and no end.

His body a bloody-ruby radiant
With noble passion, sun-souled Lucifer
Swept through the dawn colossal, swift aslant
On Eden's imbecile perimeter.
He blessed nonentity with every curse
And spiced with sorrow the dull soul of sense,

Breathed life into the sterile universe,
With Love and Knowledge drove out innocence
The Key of Joy is disobedience.

Excerpt from Aleister Crowley, *The Book of Thoth* (1944)

XV. THE DEVIL

This card is attributed to the letter ‘Ayin, which means an Eye, and it refers to Capricornus in the Zodiac.[64] In the Dark Ages of Christianity, it was completely misunderstood. Eliphaz Lévi studied it very deeply because of its connection with ceremonial magic, his favorite subject; and he re-drew it, identifying it with Baphomet, the ass-headed idol of the Knights of the Temple.[65] But at this time archaeological research had not gone very far; the nature of Baphomet was not fully understood (See Atu 0, above.) At least he succeeded in identifying the goat portrayed upon the card with Pan.

On the Tree of Life, Atu XIII and XV are symmetrically placed; they lead from Tiphareth, the human consciousness, to the spheres in which Thought (on the one hand) and Bliss (on the other) are developed. Between them, Atu XIV leads similarly to the sphere which formulates Existence (See note on Atu X and arrangement.) These three cards may therefore be summed up as a hieroglyph of the processes by which idea manifests as form.

This card represents creative energy in its most material form; in the Zodiac, Capricornus occupies the Zenith. It is the most exalted of the signs; it is the goat leaping with lust upon the summits of earth. The sign is ruled by Saturn, who makes for selfhood and perpetuity. In this sign, Mars is exalted, showing in its best form the fiery, material energy of creation. The card represents Pan Pangenetor, the All-Begetter. It is the Tree of Life as seen against a background of the exquisitely tenuous, complex, and fantastic forms of madness, the divine madness of spring, already foreseen in the meditative madness of winter; for the Sun turns northwards on entering this sign. The roots of the Tree are made transparent, in order to show the innumerable leapings of the sap; before it stands the Himalayan goat, with an eye in the center of his forehead, representing the god Pan upon the highest and most secret mountains of the earth. His creative energy is veiled in the symbol of the Wand of the Chief Adept, crowned with the winged globe and the twin serpents of Horus and Osiris.

“Hear me, Lord of the Stars,
For thee have I worshipped ever
With stains and sorrows and scars,
With joyful, joyful Endeavour.
Hear me, O lilywhite goat
Crisp as a thicket of thorns,
With a collar of gold for thy throat,
A scarlet bow for thy horns.”

The sign of Capricornus is rough, harsh, dark, even blind; the impulse to create takes no account of reason, custom, or foresight. It is divinely unscrupulous, sublimely careless of result. “thou hast no right but to do thy will. Do that, and no other shall say nay. For pure will, unassuaged of purpose, delivered from the lust of result, is every way perfect” (AL. I, 42–44).

It is further to be remarked that the trunk of the Tree pierces the heavens; about it is indicated the ring of the body of Nuith. Similarly, the shaft of the Wand goes down indefinitely to the center of earth. “If I lift up my head, I and my Nuit are one. If I droop down mine head, and shoot forth venom, then is rapture of the earth, and I and the earth are one” (AL. II, 26).

The formula of this card is then the complete appreciation of all existing things. He rejoices in the rugged and the barren no less than in the smooth and the fertile. All things equally exalt him. He represents the finding of ecstasy in every phenomenon, however naturally repugnant; he transcends all limitations; he is Pan; he is All.

It is important to notice some other correspondences. The three vowel-consonants of the Hebrew alphabet, Aleph, Yod, ‘Ayin, these three letters form the sacred name of God, I A O. These three Atu, IX, 0, and XV, thus offer a threefold explanation of the male creative energy; but this card especially represents the masculine energy at its most masculine. Saturn, the ruler, is Set, the ass-headed god of the Egyptian deserts; he is the god of the south. The name refers to all gods containing these consonants, such as Shaitan, or Satan (See *Magick* pp.336–7). Essential to the symbolism are the surroundings - barren places, especially high places. The cult of the mountain is an exact parallel. The Old Testament is full of attacks upon kings who celebrated worship in “high places”; this, although Zion itself was a mountain! This feeling persisted, even to the days of the Witches’ Sabbath, held, if possible, on a desolate summit, but (if none were available) at least in a wild spot, uncontaminated by the artfulness of men.

Note that Shabbathai, the "sphere of Saturn," is the Sabbath. Historically, the animus against witches pertains to the fear of the Jews; whose rites, supplanted by the Christian forms of Magic, had become mysterious and terrible. Panic suggested that Christian children were stolen, sacrificed, and eaten. The belief persists to this day.

In every symbol of this card there is the allusion to the highest things and most remote. Even the horns of the goat are spiral, to represent the movement of the all-pervading energy. Zoroaster defines God as "having a spiral force." Compare the more recent, if less profound, writings of Einstein.[66]

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[1] Crowley maintained his literary production during most of his life, publishing a number of works of poetry and prose fiction. These works often overlap thematically with his occult writings.

[2] A number of biographies have been written about Crowley. Of these Richard Kaczynski's *Perdurabo: The Life of Aleister Crowley* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2010) is by far the best. Crowley's own detailed autobiography, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley* (London: Arkana, 1989 [1969]), is also a valuable introduction to his life and thought. For an academic perspective consult Henrik Bogdan and Martin P. Starr's *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). See also Manon Hedenborg-White, *The Eloquent Blood: The Goddess Babalon and the Construction of Femininities in Western Esotericism* (Uppsala universitet, 2017).

[3] Hanegraaff introduces this concept in *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), where it is referred to as the secularization of esotericism. The concept is developed in *Western Esotericism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013). Hanegraaff associates the modernization of esotericism with the nineteenth-century esoteric phenomenon that is often labelled occultism. Here, however, the term is used in a somewhat narrower sense. Occultism in this context designates a loosely unified esoteric movement that was popularized through the writings of Eliphas Lévi and is characterized, among other things, by its ambition to present modern articulations of historical "Occult sciences," like astrology, alchemy, and ritual magic. Marco Pasi, "Occultism," in *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, vol. 3, ed. Kocku von Stuckrad (Leiden: Brill, 2005) pp. 1364–1368.

[4] Crowley's relationship to some of the other processes of modernization described by Hanegraaff, like psychologization, is more open to discussion and has been the object of some debate. See for example Egil Asprem, "Magic Naturalized? Negotiating Science and Occult Experience in Aleister Crowley's Scientific Illuminism," *Aries* 8:2 (2008) pp. 139–165.

[5] Johan Nilsson, *As a Fire Beneath the Ashes* (Lund, 2020).

[6] During and after his life (perhaps especially during the Satanic ritual abuse panic of the 1980s and 1990s) accusations of Satanism have sometimes been leveled against Crowley. Academic writers on the subject have, however, generally been disinclined to classify him as such. For a discussion of Crowley's relationship to Satanism in historical overviews of the movement, see Massimo Introvigne, *Satanism: A Social History* (Leiden: Brill, 2016) pp. 239–246. Ruben van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) pp. 306–314.

[7] See for example the texts dealing with Ben Kadosh and Maria de Naglowska in the present volume. For a discussion of Helena Blavatsky and her views on the figure of Lucifer, see Per Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism* (Stockholm: Molin & Sorgenfri, 2014), chapter 4.

[8] Parallels between occult comparative projects and similar tendencies in post-Enlightenment academic and proto-academic writing can be seen especially in the search for universal, transcultural patterns in religion. Crowley's writings on these subjects suggest the impact of two theoretical traditions. On the one hand, he was influenced by the type of literature (termed mythography by Joscelyn Godwin) that explained perceived transcultural patterns by reducing them to expressions of solar or phallic cults. On the other hand, he was clearly influenced by the comparative approach of James Frazer. See Joscelyn Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment* (Albany: State of New York Press, 1994). Crowley's reliance on the academic study of religion has recently been explored by Jason Josephson-Storm. Jason Josephson-Storm, *The Myth of Disenchantment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

[9] The Devil is regarded as a male figure in Crowley's writings.

[10] Ruben van Luijk has identified a number of "thematic elements" in Romantic Satanism that he believes has influenced later movements of self-identified Satanism in the twentieth century. This hypothesis fits well with what is known of the intellectual history of Satanism and the figure of the Devil. Furthermore, it seems likely to me that the reception of Romantic Satanism within the occult milieu of the turn of the last century represented an important step in the evolution of the discourse that would later constitute the ideological framework of self-identified Satanism in the twentieth century. One of the elements identified by van Luijk, the Devil's connection to nature and "flesh," seems to be related to the occult association between the Devil and the life force or a creative force in nature. Another element stresses the Devil's association with knowledge and science, and seems to have been interpreted as a connection to esoteric knowledge within the occult milieu. Ruben van Luijk, "Sex, Science, and Liberty," in *The Devil's Party*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Petersen (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013) pp. 41–52; *Children of Lucifer* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016). See also "Hymn to Lucifer" in the present volume.

[11] Usually interpreted as Astrum Argentinum or Argenteum Astrum, the Silver Star.

[12] For an example see Per Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism*, pp. 113–160.

[13] Although some movements, like LaVeyan Satanism, have obviously been inspired by the discourse of Romantic Satanism, it is significant that the various attempts at creating Satanic movements often have more in common regarding their use of rhetoric, literary motifs, and symbols than they have on an ideological level, where the laissez faire capitalism of LaVey contrasts just as much with the heterodox socialism of the Satanic Reds as with the allegedly instrumental right-wing extremism of the ONA. This indicates that the movements rely on a widespread mythology (a broad discourse on the Satanic expressed in the twentieth century to a large extent, though by no means exclusively, through popular culture) rather than any political or religious tradition. Romantic Satanism has been an important element within this broader Satanic mythology.

[14] Understood in this way Romantic Satanism is, to use the distinction made by Petersen, a discourse on the Satanic rather than a Satanic discourse. This means that it has primarily been used for artistic, rhetorical, or polemical purposes by individuals who would not have considered themselves Satanists in any religious sense. Jesper Aagaard Petersen, *Between Darwin and the Devil: Modern Satanism as Discourse, Milieu, and Self* (Trondheim: NTNU, 2011) pp. 62–67.

[15] Crowley praised Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound" as a work of genius and regarded its message as in line with his own thinking. Aleister Crowley, "Sword of Song," in Aleister Crowley, *Collected Works*, vol. 2 (Yogi Publication Society, 1974 [1906]) p. 143; "Energized Enthusiasm," *The Equinox* 1:9 (1913) pp. 17–46.

[16] The sympathy for the Miltonian Devil expressed by the romantic poets is discussed in Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism*, 114ff. Crowley writes: "After all, Milton was a great poet; and the subconscious artistic self of him was therefore bitterly antagonistic to Christianity. Not only is Satan the hero, but the triumphant hero." Crowley, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*, p. 81.

[17] Crowley, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*, p. 126.

[18] Crowley seems to somehow have gotten the idea that magical grimoires, like the *Key of Solomon*, would explicitly praise the Devil and was disappointed to find that "[t]hey merely aimed at achieving contemptible or malicious results, such as preventing a huntsman from killing game, finding buried treasure, bewitching the neighbours' cows, or 'acquiring the affection of a judge.' For all their pretended devotion to Lucifer or Belial, they were sincere Christians in spirit, and inferior Christians at that, for their methods were puerile." Crowley, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*, 126.

[19] An examination of Crowley's critique of Christianity is not possible here; the subject would require a monograph in itself. Crowley expressed his views on the matter in works such as *The World's Tragedy* (1910), *The Gospel According to St. Bernard Shaw*, and *The Fish* (the latter two, posthumously published in 1953 and 1992, respectively), but it is never really absent from any of his writings. For a discussion of Michelet see the chapter in the present volume.

[20] Like that expressed by William Godwin. Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism*, pp. 166f.

[21] Crowley regarded his critique of Christianity as partly related to political issues, e.g., the reform of the institution of marriage and the social norms it was founded on (see for instance Crowley, "New Comment," in *The Law Is For All* (Tempe: New Falcon Publications, 1996) vol. 1, p. 41. Even so, he tended to view the struggle against the destructive influence of Christianity as a Nietzschean fight for personal liberty against the slave morality of the masses, a struggle that seemed often more connected to the way of life of the individual Thelemite than it seemed related to concrete political projects.

[22] The radicalism of Crowley's stance on Christianity has been underemphasized in scholarly literature. Crowley clearly disliked Christianity so intensely that even though he did formulate an articulate, although somewhat idiosyncratic, critique of it (see for example *The Gospel According to St. Bernard Shaw*), he just as often contented himself with merely heaping abuse on "the blasphemous and superstitious premises [*sic*] of Christian theology." Crowley, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*, 67.

[23] Helena Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society) vol. 2, p. 533. This should not be taken to mean that Blavatsky was expressing a stable or systematic view of the Devil. Lucifer and Satan were peripheral figures in her writings and religious thinking, and this was even truer of Theosophy as a whole. The interpretation of these figures could vary. It seems apparent, however, that Blavatsky was articulating larger trends in the reinterpretation of diabolical figures within the occult environment of her time, and that she herself contributed to these trends. For further discussion, see Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism*, chapter 4.

[24] Aleister Crowley, "The Psychology of Hashish," *The Equinox* 1:2 (1909) pp. 31–89.

[25] Aleister Crowley, "Temple of Solomon the King," *The Equinox* 1:5 (1911) p. 89.

[26] This is explicitly stated in *Magick in Theory and Practice*. "This serpent, SATAN, is not the enemy of Man, but He who made Gods of our race, knowing Good and Evil; He bade 'Know Thyself!' and taught Initiation." Aleister Crowley, *Book 4 I–IV* (1994) p. 277.

[27] In *The International Journal of the Tantrick Order* associated with Pierre Bernard and the Tantrick Order in America one can read, for example, a quote by one Venkatarama Iyer who states that "[t]he Kundalini of the Tantricks is the serpent of the Bible," *The International Journal of the Tantrick Order* 5:1 (1906) p. 167.

[28] Crowley, *The Law Is For All*, p. 41.

[29] In Thelemic lore stagnation and the inappropriate avoidance of death are associated with the concept of the "black brothers," a kind of black magicians against whom Crowley often warns.

[30] Crowley, *The Law Is For All*, p. 41.

[31] Published in London 1946 by the Ordo Templi Orientis.

[32] Crowley, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*, p. 32.

[33] For example, Péladan and his circle advertised one of their art exhibitions with a poster showing the image of Perseus holding the severed head of Zola. Sasha Chaitow, "How to Become a Mage (or Fairy)," *The Pomegranate* 14 (2012) pp. 185–211. See also Per Faxneld, "Mona Lisa's Mysterious Smile: The Artist Initiate in Esoteric New Religions," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 19:4 (2016) pp. 14–32.

[34] Which, of course, in itself was highly dependent on Romanticism.

[35] Crowley, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*, 345. Such views should not be regarded as mere rhetoric or as an empty romantic cliché. A basic assumption underlying much of Crowley's writing was the possibility of communicating with spiritual entities. Crowley does not appear to have regarded such communication only as a source of religious transformation, and it could also become an expression of aesthetic qualities. He argued, for example, that one indication of the supra-human origin of the *Book of the Law*, the text that constituted the basis on which he built his new religion, Thelema, was the beauty of its English (Aleister Crowley, "Genesis Libri AL," in *Book 4 I–IV*, ed. Aleister Crowley (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1994) pp. 427f). Examples of the opposite tendency, the ritual use of poetry to induce "divine ecstasy" in the participants are even easier to find. Note, for example, the use of poetry along with music and ecstatic dancing in the rites of Eleusis. *The Rites of Eleusis* (Thame: Mandrake Press, 1990).

[36] The poem itself was first published posthumously in 1970 by Dove Press. It later appeared in the magazine *Earth Religion News* in 1974 and in *Equinox* 3:10 (New York, 1986).

[37] The original version of *Lucifer Rising* was finished in 1967, but much of the footage from the film was stolen and it was remade several times in "dozens of subtly different versions." Asked to clarify his views on the figure of Lucifer Anger, in an interview with journalist Gavin Baddeley, he stated that to him Lucifer is the "muse of the artist." He also explicitly referred to "Hymn to Lucifer." Gavin Baddeley, *Lucifer Rising* (London: Plexus, 1999) pp. 47–53. Patti Gaal-Holmes, *A History of 1970s Experimental Film: Britain's Decade of Diversity* (New York: Palgrave, 2015) p. 115.

[38] Coph Nia, *The Dark Illuminati* (Cold Meat Industries, 2007); Daemonarch, *Hermeticum* (Indie Europe, 1998); Abysmal Torment, *Cultivate the Apostate* (Willowtip Records, 2014).

[39] E.g., Michael Ford, *Adversarial Light: Magick of the Nephilim* (Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2009).

[40] The line between the two may be difficult to draw, however, and at least some of the artists making use of the figure of Lucifer may do so for religious reasons.

[41] Examples can be found in writings connected with the Dragon Rouge Thomas Karlsson, *Kabbala, kliffot och den goetiska magin* (Sundbyberg: Ouroboros Produktion, 2004).

[42] Kaczynski, *Perdurabo*, pp. 530f.

[43] Ronald Decker and Michael Dummett, *A History of the Occult Tarot* (London: Duckworth, 2002). David Allen Harvey, *Beyond Enlightenment* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005) p. 63.

[44] Decker and Dummett, *A History of the Occult Tarot*.

[45] The most influential of these was Papus' *Le Tarot des Bohémiens* (Paris: Flammarion, 1889).

[46] These sources are explicitly acknowledged in the first part of *The Book of Thoth*. See also Decker and Dummett, *A History of the Occult Tarot*, pp. 142–157.

[47] "A Description of the Cards of the Tarot, with Their Attributions; Including a Method of Divination by Their Use," *The Equinox* 1:8 pp. 143–210. *The Equinox* was a journal published by Crowley beginning in 1909.

[48] Kaczynski, *Perdurabo*, p. 10.

[49] Or, more accurately, the card that is attributed to the number fifteen. Since the deck includes a

card attributed to the number zero, “The Devil” could be considered the sixteenth card.

[50] Apart from the small cards and the court cards, the tarot deck also contains trump cards with titles such as “Death,” “The Tower,” and “The Devil.”

[51] By scientific in this context I refer to a type of reasoning that is in some way connected to the methodology of an academic discipline rather than a view representing academic consensus on any particular question.

[52] It could also be argued that occultism and the professional academic study of religion shared certain precursors in the mythography of the nineteenth century. Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment*.

[53] Crowley’s opinions of the new Aeon, the revelation proclaiming this Aeon, and his own role as a prophet can be studied in many of his writings, e.g., his autobiography and the commentaries to *The Book of the Law*. Crowley, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*. For a discussion see Henrik Bogdan, “Envisioning the Birth of a New Aeon,” in *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism*, ed. Henrik Bogdan and Martin P. Starr (2012).

[54] Crowley, *Book 4*, p. 165.

[55] Crowley, *Book 4 part 3*, pp. 121–282.

[56] For example in the essay ”Notes for an Astral Atlas,” published as an appendix to *Book 4*, where Satan is called “the Sun-Father.” Crowley, *Book 4*, pp. 490–503.

[57] Note for example the “commentary” to chapter 19 ”The Leopard and the Deer” in *The Book of Lies* ([1913] 1996) or *De arte magica* (1987 [1913]).

[58] “Berashith: An Essay in Ontology,” in the *Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*, vol. 2, ed. Aleister Crowley (Yogi Publication Society, [1906] n.d.); *Magick Without Tears* (Tempe: New Falcon Publications, [1954] 1994) pp. 52–63; the essay “Love” in *Little Essays Toward Truth* (Tempe: New Falcon, 1991 [1938]) pp. 78–82. See also van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 310.

[59] See the chapter on Ben Kadosh in the present volume.

[60] Some other principles were also seen as related to these gods. Especially Pan was seen as connected to the “qabalistic zero,” the nothingness from which the world emerged. See Aleister Crowley, *777 and other Qabalistic Writings* (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1986).

[61] In the book Crowley, for example, makes an effort to carefully explain subjects that can be said to constitute fundamental details of his worldview, among other things the kabbalistic tree of life, subjects that his followers were not supposed to be ignorant of. Aleister Crowley, *Book of Thoth* (Stamford: U.S. Games [1944] 2002) p. 12.

[62] In a letter to Gerald Yorke he stated for example that the parallels he describes in the book among the *Yì jīng*, geomancy, and the tarot proved that these divinatory systems were based on an objective reality beyond cultural differences and that this fact would someday lead to the recognition of the validity of his magical system in the scientific community. If Crowley really believed that the content of *The Book of Thoth* would have such an impact, he must also have intended the book to reach beyond the narrow social environment constituted by himself and his followers. Kaczynski, *Perdurabo*, pp. 510f.

[63] The only one to appear in Crowley’s lifetime.

[64] Aleister Crowley, *The Book of Thoth: A Short Essay on the Tarot of the Egyptians* (London: Chiswick Press, 1944) pp. 105ff.

[65] Footnote in original: The early Christians also were accused of worshipping an Ass, or ass-headed god. See Browning, *The Ring and the Book* (The Pope).

[66] Footnote in original: Compare Saturn, at one end of the Seven Sacred Wanderers, with the Moon at the other: the agéd man and the young girl—see “The Formula of Tetragrammaton.” They are linked

as no other two planets, since $3^2 = 9$, and each contains in itself the extremes of its own idea.

11

Kenneth Grant (Typhonian Order), “Vinum Sabbati” (1961)

Johan Nilsson

Kenneth Grant (1924–2011) became an influential figure in the British Thelemic movement, and to some extent British occultism in general, after Aleister Crowley’s death in 1947 (regarding Thelema and Crowley, see the chapter in the present volume). Grant corresponded with Crowley during the 1940s and briefly worked as his secretary and assistant. When Crowley died, Grant sought to organize the remaining British Thelemic milieu and was granted a charter to create a lodge of the Ordo Templi Orientis in England.[1] Following conflicts with the O.T.O. leadership, Grant was expelled and founded his own organization, later referred to as the Typhonian Order.[2] Grant was also involved in a literary and spiritual collaboration with the British artist and occultist Austin Osman Spare (1886–1956). His personal relationships with Crowley and Spare, however, should not divert the attention from the fact that Grant is a product of a broader English-speaking esoteric milieu that has shaped large parts of contemporary occultism, being inhabited by individuals like Violet Mary Firth (better known as Dion Fortune, 1890–1946), Gerald Gardner (1884–1964, founder of Wicca), and others of similar significance. Grant’s writings, although quite idiosyncratic, to a large extent represent a continuation and development of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century British occultism.

Throughout his life, Kenneth Grant worked in close collaboration with his wife Steffi Grant (1924–2011), who often contributed artwork for his books. There is no doubt that most of Grant’s influence on twentieth-century occultism has been exercised through his writing. He is the author of several books, most notably the Typhonian Trilogies, a series of publications

comprising three trilogies, which were published between 1972 and 2002. His bibliography also includes books about his relationship with Crowley and Spare, works of fiction, and some essays printed in a handful of British and Indian magazines, mostly during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

The Typhonian Trilogies contain many of the elements that characterize much of late nineteenth-[-] and early twentieth-century occultism, including a fascination with Indian religion. Grant's work expresses, among other things, an eccentric interpretation of occult kabbalah, an interest in nineteenth-century ceremonial magic, and prolific references to pre-Christian and pre-Islamic religions and mythologies.[3] Like most of the writers who influenced him (perhaps with the exception of Spare), Grant maintained a belief in the universality of esoteric wisdom, arguing that the same spiritual truths exist in all (or most) human cultures and time periods. Furthermore, like most occultists he partly saw this wide diffusion of esoteric truth as a consequence of a historical preservation of primordial esoteric teachings and practices.[4] The exploration of the historical genealogies of these teachings and practices constitute a recurring motif in the Typhonian Trilogies. Claiming historical connections between geographically and culturally distant religious expressions serves the added function of allowing Grant to argue for the essential compatibility among, for example, Thelema, Advaita Vedanta, and Yoruba religion. In this regard Grant is not at all dissimilar to the early occultists who influenced him, although he did deviate from most earlier emic, occult historiography by privileging the religions of Sub-Saharan Africa.[5]

Grant, moreover, differs from his predecessors in the Theosophical society or the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn by drawing on symbols, spiritual entities, and practices that are widely given negative interpretations by other representatives of the occult milieu. One example is his interest in Kabbalistic demonology. Another original feature is the importance Grant placed on literary fiction; the works of authors such as H. P. Lovecraft and Arthur Machen inspired him as he considered them to be unconscious transmitters of esoteric wisdom.[6]

To a certain extent Grant could be described as heavily influenced by Spare and Crowley as his writings are steeped in their concepts and terminology, and he identified himself with Crowley's Thelemic movement. In many regards however, Grant differs strongly from his predecessors. He

gives the concepts of Crowley and Spare new meaning, draws on obscure and ambiguous passages in their writings, and declares himself sympathetic with spiritual principles that are viewed as destructive by more orthodox Thelemites.[7]

Speculation on the identity of Satan, as a symbol or a force in nature, is a recurring minor theme in Grant's writings. Satan to Grant is synonymous with the Egyptian god Set, who plays an important role in his esoteric worldview. The principle that Satan represents has, according to Grant, been misunderstood in older religious systems—Satan is really a positive figure related to the enlightenment of humankind. Set, Satan, and related mythological figures have been regarded as destructive because they represent the dissolution of the individual self. Far from being something to be feared, Grant sees this dissolution as an important prerequisite for the absorption of consciousness into the divine.[8]

"Vinum Sabbati" (1961)

Origin

"Vinum Sabbati" was originally published as a folder in a limited edition of a hundred copies in 1961, and later reprinted as a part of *Hidden Lore* (1989), by Skoob Books. The original folder was published as a part of a series of pamphlets, called the *Carfax Monographs*, each comprising of a single text discussing various esoteric subjects, such as the Kabbalistic Tree of Life and the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. "Vinum Sabbati" is an interpretation of the idea of the Witches' Sabbath rooted in Grant's esoteric understanding of occult historiography and magical practice.[9]

Already in 1961 there was an established tradition of occult interest in traditional depictions of the Witches' Sabbath. At this time, the main thesis of Margaret Murray—the notion that early modern witchcraft trials of Europe had been an attempt to suppress a surviving fertility cult dating back to pre-Christian times—had not yet been completely discredited, at least not outside specialist circles.[10] Ideas similar to those of Murray's had however existed in French and English occultism at least since the middle of the nineteenth century. The influential French occultist Eliphas Lévi (see separate chapter in the present volume) was of the opinion that even if innocent people had

sometimes been convicted in the witch trials, witchcraft itself, or at least some of its practices, was very real. The practice, according to such occult interpretations, dated back to before Christianity and still had modern successors in nineteenth-century Europe.[11] Many occultists around the turn of the century shared his views, and people like the Golden Dawn member C. W. Brodie-Innes were fascinated by the history and supposed tradition of the witches.[12] Crowley took an ambivalent view of witchcraft, pronouncing it at times to be a sterile and illusory type of magical practice,[13] while at other times he seems to speak of a historical witch cult as a precursor to his own religious movement.[14] This later position, as well as the positive interpretation of witchcraft made by Spare (who claimed to have been initiated by a "Witch"[15] at an early age), seems to have influenced Grant. The same can probably be said of his acquaintance with Gerald Gardner, who was a witchcraft revivalist and the creator of Wicca.[16]

Content

"Vinum Sabbati" is a short essay on the Witches' Sabbath, and two principal lines of reasoning are intertwined in the text. To some extent Grant argues that the Witches' Sabbath had roots in pre-Christian magical ceremony; the main part of the text, however, is an attempt to explain the logic and magical motive behind the rite of the Sabbath.

What Grant here calls "the medieval Sabbath" is perceived by him to be a corrupted remnant of an ancient Egyptian religious ceremony dedicated to the god Set. Even though the witches performing it in later times have misunderstood this ceremony, it has still rested on the same principles as its Egyptian model.[17] Grant is especially interested in the "backwards symbolism" of the Sabbath, which he perceives to be an expression of its essence. What was inverted or backwards at the Sabbath is a symbolic expression of partly forgotten magical principles that were at one time used to induce the consciousness to reach back to its source, to be reabsorbed in what Grant calls "the pre-conceptual beyond the Self, where the Self exists as a non-spatial, non-temporal and eternal reality, an atom, invisible, perfect, whole."

The Devil, presiding over the Sabbath, is described by Grant as a reinterpretation of older pagan deities such as Pan or Set, he is the sun and the life force—but he is also that source of creation in which the performers

of the Sabbath are trying to reabsorb themselves.

Even though “Vinum Sabbati” is one of Grant’s earliest texts, it expounds basic elements of an understanding of the Devil that is never really revised. Later, in the Typhonian Trilogies, the figure of the Devil is related to the same two basic motifs. On the one hand, the Christian Satan is interpreted historically as a product of the misrepresentation and demonization of earlier pre-Christian divinities (often the Egyptian Set). On the other, the entity mistakenly called Satan is understood as a real spiritual force related to human soteriology (doctrine of human salvation). Both motifs—but especially the first—can be traced back to the late nineteenth-century occult milieu and its reception of romantic Satanism as well as its influence from projects of comparativism within the study of religion.[18] The motif of the soteriological Devil differs slightly from older variations in that it does not primarily emphasize Satan as the revealer of hidden knowledge or embodiment of an immanent, creative life force. Instead, Grant portrays the Devil as the one who guides humankind to the non-existence beyond creation. This nothingness could be conceptualized in kabbalistic (*ain*),[19] Thelemic (*Nuit*),[20] or Buddhist (*sunyata*)[21] terms, but is always portrayed as a state that the followers of Grant’s Typhonian current should strive to be reabsorbed in.

Genre and Audience

“Vinum Sabbati” seems to be directed at a broad audience in the occult milieu of its day. Grant assumes the reader to accept commonplace elements of the occultist worldview, like the existence of the “astral plane,” but he does not mention any specific occult writers or organizations, nor is the worldview of any such organization taken for granted. In spite of the small first editions, and the somewhat Golden Dawn-oriented subject matter of the *Carfax Monographs*, the “Vinum Sabbati” does not really demand any specialized knowledge and would have been readable for most people with an interest in the subject. The text is no way nearly as demanding as Grant’s later publications would be.

Reception and Influence

Until its publication in *Hidden Lore* the essay must have remained an exceedingly obscure text, and even after the re-edition its circulation has been

small. During the last decades, however, certain representatives of the contemporary witchcraft movement have shown signs of being influenced by Grant's writing, or at least of approaching his vision of what constitutes witchcraft. One example of this trend can be found in the writings of the late Andrew Chumbley (1967–2004). Chumbley was involved with Grant's Typhonian Order for a period of time before becoming associated with an organization called the Cultus Sabbati and the practice of what that organization has termed traditional witchcraft. In this context, Chumbley combined an interest in British folk magic with Sufism, Indian Tantra, and diverse expressions of Western esotericism. There are some noticeable parallels between Chumbley's understanding of witchcraft, as expressed for example in the book *Azoëtia* (1992), and that of Grant. Chumbley uses terminology strongly reminiscent of Grant's vocabulary, for example, "the ophidian current." There are also similarities in their respective interpretations of the Witches' Sabbath, such as the importance of animal symbolism and transformations, and the view of the ritual as at least partly enacted in a visionary (or "astral") trance, perhaps, but not necessarily, induced by the "witches' ointment." Both writers moreover retain the traditional association between the Devil and witchcraft, even if they reinterpret the figure. It should be pointed out, however, that these parallels coexist with many differences, and it would be prudent not to overemphasize the similarities.

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Excerpt from Kenneth Grant, *Vinum Sabbati* (1961)

The wine of the Sabbath is the blood of the saints which seethes in the Holy Grail.[22] The distorting mirrors of countless centuries have produced curious images of this wine and grail so that several waves of myth and legend have incorporated their symbolism into a vast ocean of subconscious imagery.

The saints to which reference is made are pre-Christian and belong to a far older Gnosis of which but fragmentary accounts have survived. Sufficient is known, however, to assume that the *agapae* of early Christianity carried on a magical rather than a religious tradition, wherein the blood of Charis formed the central eucharist. Charis was the earlier Christ, the female form of the Logos as Sophia (Wisdom), and the Wisdom here implied concerned physical and psycho-physical, that is to say magical, phenomena, rather than purely mystical or religious experience. She was the goddess who clothed the living word with flesh, thus manifesting matter. She spoke at set seasons through a chosen medium, the pythoness or prophetess. Originally, before the fructifying principle of spirit was known to be male or solar, the pythoness held first place in the religious consciousness of the ancients. With the new knowledge, however, came a re-evaluation of the goddess herself, who was degraded to the status of which, sterile and inert so long as she remained uninspired by the solar energies. She was relegated to the night and became identified with the moon, revolving in the void; her worship degenerated into

witchcraft, sorcery and black magic (black because of the night in which it was performed). No longer regarded as the Queen of Heaven, but as the symbol of misfortune, she was evoked and propitiated by infernal rites.

The ancient Egyptian Sabbath of Set, or Sut-Typhon, however, did embody both solar and lunar elements and this was the combination of the great life currents referred to by the Egyptians as the Ba and the Khu. It is from this wine, and the Sabbath thereof, that the later mediaeval misconception arose. Set or Set-An (later called Satan) was the prototype of yearning for things unknown, for the infinite. Satan means *the opposer* or *the opposite one*, and the Satanic concept possessed some alluring component which made it the symbol of all man desired as complementary to himself.

The Goat of Mendes, Pan Satyros and the Baphomet of the Templars, were terrifying yet seductive images of a force fatal to the profane. From the horns of the ram or goat, which typified the virile solar force of male magical energy, came the idea of the horned devil of sorcery and witchcraft which presided over the infernal sacraments of Set, as Baphomet. The sacraments involved ingredients that a later, more prurient age, had come to regard as infernal and unclean, even as today the ancient Egyptian beetle which rolls the faecal globe between its mandibles has become an abhorrent thing to minds which cannot identify the Sun with such an emblem. Nonetheless, the beetle resumed for the priests of Khem a symbol of light and redemption from death or darkness, by virtue of its presumed ability to reproduce itself from its own matter. Likewise, the alchemists distilled their glowing stone of rare and wonderous virtue from obnoxious brews containing apparently useless ingredients spurned by the uninitiated.

The zoömorphic imagery of the Sabbath is of great interest and reflects back along the unending avenue of mirrors which constitutes an immensely protracted cycle of time. The goat or ram with outspread wings, as of a giant vampire bat; the cat, toad, basilisk, beetle, serpent, spider, and even the babe whose fat went into the making of the infernal unguent, have profound magical meanings which may be fathomed only at levels of human experience long ante-dating any known organized religion. The nocturnal or diurnal nature of these animals fitted them as *types* in the ancient rites and ceremonies.

Most mediaeval Sabbatic symbolism has reference to the astral plane where the transformations so frequently described in the literature of witchcraft were actually enacted. This plane was the plane of the dead in

Egyptian symbolism, the dead being synonymous with the subconscious realms vivified only when the self entered them through the process of sleep or trance conditions. Transvection, for instance, is an astral phenomenon, the unguent applied to the body of the witch being conductive to sleep and ecstasy. The solitudes on high and barren places, or in concealed groves by running streams always lit by baleful moonlight; the devil or horned deity indicative of Desire, which presided over the Sabbath—all such elements fusing at astral levels liberated a peculiar effluvium, tenuous but material, which enabled the witch to incarnate her dream sufficiently for it to be tactual to those present at the rite. The power generated from the enormous release of subconscious energy liberated by the Sabbath facilitated the actual realization of the latent Wish which surfaced on the wave of mass hysteria which the ceremony induced. Set forms of belief and behavior were broken up at the Sabbath in order to free and obtain the preconceptual energy which ordinarily informs Belief. From this quintessential energy the *vinum sabbati* was prepared, imbibed and absorbed.

It was in a fusion of solar and lunar energies that the secret of life and regeneration lay. The blood is the life, but the brew of the Sabbatic rites was not the red blood of animal life as it flowed through the veins of the living body, but the essential *prana* or ojas stored in the secret centers of energy which welled forth at certain specific seasons. The Rite of the Sabbath entailed a knowledge of these seasons as well as of the centers wherein the primal Bindu abode prior to its massing in the form of flesh. It was in order to turn this blood or essence back upon itself, so that it might form itself into non-material bodies, that the *vinum sabbati* was prepared and imbibed. It was in fact the matrix of all spiritual creation or—better still—creation in the spiritual form; a magical rather than religious process.

The Set or Seat of magical power was symbolic of the source. The Sabbath of Set (or Satan) was therefore the rite of return to the source and to that which lay beyond it, not in an infernal but in an inverse manner.

Atavistic resurgence, a primal urge towards union with the Divine by returning to the common source of all, is indicated by the backward symbolism peculiar to all Sabbatic ceremonies, as also of many ideas connected with witchcraft, sorcery and magic. Whether it be the symbol of the Moon presiding over nocturnal ecstasies; the words of power chanted backwards; the back-to-back dance performed in opposition to the Sun’s course; the devil’s tail—all are instances of reversal and symbolic of Will and

Desire turning within and down to subconscious regions, to the remote past, there to surprise the required atavism or energy for purposes of transformation, healing, initiation, construction or destruction. This is the inner meaning of symbolic reversal, of depth instead of height, of the left (subconsciousness), instead of the right (empirical or waking consciousness), of female instead of male, lunar instead of solar. The cat, as a denizen of night, and associated with the Moon became a type which—in mediaeval times—was confused with the actual animal itself. Likewise the vampire bat, because of its highly specialized mechanism for absorbing blood, and its obvious affinity with night, became an important type in the Sabbatic mysteries. But the priests of ancient times, in Egypt and elsewhere, did not wear animal masks because they were pretending to be these animals, or because they were playing some ludicrous charade that some later epoch could deride and denigrate; they assumed thereby the powers which these beasts concentrated within themselves and which their outer forms merely betrayed, for all form bears a direct relation to the energy which it limits and defines.

It was by a system akin to the atavistic resurgence already described that the priests obtained the peculiar condition of consciousness which any specific animal focused and expressed, and with it the powers and attributes corresponding. We have in the mediaeval mockery of the so-called Sabbath, clear indication of this backward reaching, not only into a vastly remote past (for the purpose of acquiring lost powers by atavistic resurgence), but also into the preconceptual beyond of the Self, where the Self exists as a non-spatial, non-temporal and eternal reality, an atom, indivisible, perfect, whole —the Atman of Hindu religious philosophy. In ancient Egypt this atom was Atum, the Sun-god, going down or back, declining. The word is retained in modern language as Autumn, the Fall.

The sacrifice of infants at the Sabbath was likewise a corruption of the metaphysical doctrine which underlies all magic ritual—the sacrifice of life in matter to life in spirit, that is to say the returning to its source of the product of conception so that a preconceptual condition of pure awareness might be realized. The mirror of this pure and perfect state was symbolized by the Moon in whose cool silver the Sun resplendently shines, at night; in the unfathomable darkness of the void. In such puerile corruptions of the original Rite as the recitation in reverse of the Lord’s Prayer, as also in the homage offered to the hindquarters of the Sabbatic goat, we see concealed

again the nature of a process that is essentially one of introversion; a path of return, renewal and regeneration; of remembering backwards until the source is reached, and beyond the source itself to the primal and preconceptual ocean of infinite consciousness.

The night-sky sown with stars gave rise to the conception—again Egyptian—of a vast goddess arched over the earth or, more precisely, crouched as if it were on all fours over it. This was the original glyph of bringing forth to birth, or bearing the son (Sun). The myriad stars shone forth as tokens of infinite possibility—great suns yet to be born—which in their season would find ingress into matter, as symbolized by the crouching form. In the later Sabbatic Rite this majestic concept became the flying witch who flew through the night straddling a broom-stick, and the broom was—even at the comparatively late period of the Druids—a symbol of the Sun.

Mediaeval misconceptions about the Sabbath arose from a confusion of theological metaphysics with the purely magical physics of impersonal or elemental forces. The idea of evil arose through attributing these impersonal powers to a person in the form of one sole God or Creator—the personal God made in man's image. Pantheism permitted the free function of each and every part of the psycho-physical personality of man. When the elemental powers were claimed as personal possessions, that is to say when man regarded himself not as the channel or priest of such powers but as the possessor of them, he was forced to divide them into good and evil manifestations of his own inherent energy, in order to explain the existence in himself of seemingly disruptive or immoral forces. Thus, Satan became associated with those very energies which stemmed from the source or seat of creation. Satan, the Sun in the South, was the disruptive, destructive power of nature as well as the life-giving source. In this dichotomy of function abides the entire reason for the origin of the idea of good and evil and the mediaeval distortion of the Sabbatic Rite.

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[1] In recent years, Grant has attracted some scholarly attention, although his place in, and significance to, the history of twentieth-century esotericism still largely remains unexplored. A good all-round introduction can be found in Henrik Bogdan, "Kenneth Grant and the Typhonian Tradition," in *The Occult World*, ed. Christopher Partridge (York: Routledge, 2015) pp. 323–330. Dave Evans has written about Grant from the perspective of twentieth-century British occultism; Dave Evans, *The History of British Magic after Crowley* (Harpenden: Hidden Publishing, 2007). Others have explored his views on fiction and his intertextual connection to the writings of H. P. Lovecraft as well as his

relationship to Indian religion. Johan Nilsson, "En invasion av verkligheten," in Per Faxneld and Mattias Fyhr, *Förborgade Tecken* (Umeå: H:Ström Text och Kultur, 2010); John Engle, "Cults of Lovecraft," *Mythlore* 33:1 (2014) pp. 85–98; Gordan Djurdjevic, *India and the Occult: The Influence of South Asian Spirituality on Modern Western Occultism* (New York: Palgrave, 2014). For an in-depth discussion of his sexual magic see Manon Hedenborg-White, *The Eloquent Blood: The Goddess Babalon and the Construction of Femininities in Western Esotericism* (Uppsala: Uppsala universitet, 2017) pp. 245–286.

[2] The organization was formerly known as the Typhonian Ordo Templi Orientis. There have been many organizations calling themselves Ordo Templi Orientis during the twentieth century, and they should not be confused with one another. Today, the American version is the largest. It has also had its claim to be the legitimate continuation of the organization led by Crowley confirmed in court. See Marco Pasi, "Ordo Templi Orientis," in *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, ed. Wouter Hanegraaff et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

[3] According to Marco Pasi, these features are all common to occultism and understood as a phenomenon beginning in the nineteenth century with the writings of Eliphas Lévi. Marco Pasi, "Occultism," in *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, ed. Kocku von Stuckrad (Leiden: Brill, 2006). Grant could also be seen as an example of modern "ritual magic" as described by Egil Asprem. Egil Asprem, "Contemporary Ritual Magic," *The Occult World*, ed. Christopher Partridge (New York: Routledge, 2015).

[4] For a discussion of occult historiography and ancient wisdom narratives see Johan Nilsson, *As a Fire Beneath the Ashes* (Lund, 2020).

[5] See for example Kenneth Grant, *Cults of the Shadow* (London: Skoob, 1994) pp. 23–44.

[6] Nilsson, "En invasion av verkligheten," pp. 260–262.

[7] See for example his views on Choronzon, a destructive entity in Thelemic demonology—as described by Crowley—that is transformed into something much more ambivalent in the writings of Grant. This tendency could be said to foreshadow the antinomian trend in what Kennet Granholm has called the Left-hand Path in contemporary esotericism. Kennet Granholm, "Left-Hand Path Magic and Animal Rights," *Nova Religio* 12:4 (2009) pp. 28–49.

[8] Kenneth Grant, *The Magical Revival* (London: Skoob, 1991 [1972]) p. 24.

[9] Henrik Bogdan, *Kenneth Grant: A Bibliography* (Göteborg: Academia Esoterica Press, 2003)

[10] Although Murray's thesis had been widely criticized from the beginning, it was not completely rejected within academia until the 1970s. In the popular imagination, and within pagan and esoteric movements, this rejection likely took one or two decades longer. Ronald Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[11] See for example chapters 15 and 16 in Eliphas Lévi, *Dogme et rituel de la haute magie*, vol. 2 (Paris: Germer Ballière, 1861).

[12] See for example J. W. Brodie-Innes, *Scottish Witchcraft Trials* (London: Chiswick Press, 1891).

[13] See for example the discussion on witchcraft in Magick in Theory and Practice. Aleister Crowley, *Book 4* (Boston: Wesier Books, [1930] 2002) pp. 156–157.

[14] See the passage on "The Sabbath of the Adepts" in Aleister Crowley, "De Nuptiis Secretis Deorum Cum Hominibus," in *O.T.O. Rituals and Sex Magick*, ed. A. R. Naylor (Thame: I-H-O Books, 1999) p. 287. He also claims to have visited the Witches' Sabbath with his astral body in one of his diaries. Aleister Crowley, *The Magical Record of the Beast 666* (Letchworth: Duckworth, 1972) pp. 114–115.

[15] Spare seems to allude to this in his essay "Mind to Mind and How." Published in *Two Tracts on Cartomancy* (London: Fulgur, 1997). Grant makes a much more romantic claim in Kenneth Grant, *Images and Oracles of Austin Osman Spare* (London: Fulgur, 2003).

[16] Evans, *The History of British Magic after Crowley*, p. 284. Kenneth and Steffi Grant, *Zos Speaks!* (London: Fulgur, 1998).

[17] Ancient wisdom narratives tracing the diffusion of what Grant calls the Typhonian tradition in diverse cultures and times are common in his writings. Egypt often plays a central part in these narratives.

[18] The explanation of religious phenomena through their history and through the comparative method was characteristic of the attitude to religion during this period. It was, of course, not exclusively a product of the second half of the nineteenth century but became more prominent during this time as a consequence of the growing influence of the academic, secular study of religion.

[19] Grant, *Cults of the Shadow*, p. 210.

[20] Grant, *The Magical Revival*, p. 222.

[21] Kenneth Grant, *Outer Gateways* (London: Skoob, 1994) p. 68.

[22] Kenneth Grant, *Hidden Lore: The Carfax Monographs* (London: Skoob Books Publishing, 1989). No page numbers given.

12

The Process Church of the Final Judgement, "The Gods on War" (1967) and "The Gods and Their People" (1970)

Fredrik Gregorius

The Process Church of the Final Judgement was an apocalyptic organization, active primarily in California during the 1960s and 1970s. Focused on the idea of a unity between the gods of the universe (Jehovah, Lucifer, Satan, and Christ), the Process Church developed a highly original form of theology. Becoming manifest in the counter-cultural milieu of the 1960s, it combined Satanism with Christian apocalypticism and ideas derived from Scientology.

The Process Church was founded by Robert DeGrimston (1935–, born Robert Moor) and Mary Anne DeGrimston (1931–2005, born MacLean). The couple met through the Church of Scientology, which Robert joined in 1962. Mary Ann had joined a year before and quickly advanced in the church to become an auditor.[1] Although their career in Scientology was short—they broke with the organization in 1963—the couple continued to practice their own version of its therapy method, which they called Compulsions Analysis. As a result, Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard (1911–1986) declared them "Suppressive Persons" in 1965, meaning that they were labeled enemies of Scientology and beyond any chance of redemption.[2] The couple started to gather a small following in the growing alternative spiritual scene in London during the 1960s, and in the same year that they were declared Suppressive Persons they started to feel that their new group shared some form of spirituality that went beyond the therapeutic. It seems, however, that their ideas were rather vague and unarticulated at this point. While they had already started calling themselves the Process, there exists no evidence that the theology that would later be the foundation for the movement was in

place at this time. There are, nonetheless, some indications that Mary Ann DeGrimston had developed certain original ideas about psychometrics. According to these ideas, individual personalities could be labelled as belonging to larger more general categories that also had a spiritual component. Timothy Wyllie (1940–2017), one of the earliest members of the group, claims that Mary Ann explained to him that he was of extraterrestrial origin, belonging to the Serpent People related to the serpent in the Garden of Eden.[3] The notion seems similar to ideas that were later associated with the organization, according to which individual people belong to either Satan, Lucifer, Christ, or Jehovah (or, later in their development, a combination thereof).

In 1966, the small group observed increasing tensions with their social surroundings and decided to relocate to Xtul in Mexico, where they would witness some of their first communal spiritual revelations. During their stay in Xtul, members of the Process experienced spiritual communications in the form of automatic writings that supposedly revealed new knowledge about God and the nature of humankind. This marked the beginning of the development of what was known within the group as "processean theology."[4] In the Xtul dialogues there is no mention of either Christ, Satan, or Lucifer, figures that would later play a significant part in their system. Rather, the focus was exclusively on Jehovah.[5] The texts mainly deal with the need to separate the conscious from the unconscious in order to integrate God into the mind. The dialogues are largely based around ideas that can be found in Scientology and Dianetics.[6] The Process' concept of the unconscious is here similar to Scientology's notion of engrams—mental images or blockages, caused by past traumatic experiences, which create events or patterns of behavior preventing us from acting with a clear awareness. As our behavioral patterns are determined by a reactive memory of earlier events, our behavior becomes irrational.[7] The Process, following this line of reasoning, does not see the unconscious as a positive source of knowledge but rather as something that prevents the individual from acting with clarity and because of that also from acting with the knowledge of God. In the dialogues we find theological reflections that would later serve as the foundation for the Process Church's attempt at integration of the four gods they subsequently identified. At this point, God was seen as something beyond human comprehension, as a unity, but below God understood in this sense there are also other gods and

universes:

> 1 Is there more than one universe? Yes. On various levels there are many universes, but they are all only part of the One True Universe, which exists on all levels. That is to say, there are many Gods, but only One True GOD who embodies them all.
> 2 Is each God, then, a universe? Or an aspect of a universe. Jehovah for example is the Knowledge of the Physical Universe.[8]

On October 7, 1966, Xtul was struck by a hurricane. After this dramatic event, most of the members moved back to London, where they, inspired by the Xtul dialogues, began to build the Process Church as a new religious movement. Robert and Mary Ann DeGrimston travelled around the Middle East, and in 1967 Robert DeGrimston completed and published the first two of his more apocalyptic works, *As it is!* and *A Candle in Hell.*[9] Both texts outline a cosmology in which the material world is hell and humanity leads itself away from God. Instead of following the light of God, we act in opposition to the divine since we are led astray by our flawed human understanding of what is good and moral. This is represented by the candle referred to in the title of the second work. The candle is not a candle that lights up the darkness of hell, but rather a human-made light obscuring the knowledge of God's light within us. This pessimistic view of humankind would remain a central part of the teachings of the Process.

The controversial teachings regarding the Unity of Christ and Satan were probably formulated and developed for the first time in 1967.[10] During this period, the DeGrimstons were traveling across the United States and during that trip met Anton LaVey. The sociologist William Bainbridge, who performed extensive fieldwork with the group, claims that it was after this meeting that Satan emerged alongside Jehovah. However, Bainbridge also makes clear that it is hard to determine LaVey's impact.[11] Later that year, these teachings were expanded to include notions of the three gods of the universe: Jehovah, Lucifer, and Satan, with Christ as the unifier between them. Christ seems to have been the last of the gods to be added and was first the unifying principle and later became a deity in his own right.[12] The gods were related to different personality types, and each person could be connected to one of them or two. Robert embodied the principles of Christ and Lucifer and Mary Ann those of Jehovah and Satan.[13] Furthermore, the gods were all, except for Christ, regarded as limited and definable. God in the ultimate sense was not identified with any of these gods but was regarded as

being beyond them all. None of the gods were evil—rather, evil was the "grey," forces of society, conformity, and moderation.[14]

In 1967, the Process Church of the Final Judgement was incorporated by that name in Louisiana when several members, including Robert and Mary Ann DeGrimston, had relocated to New Orleans after Xtul.[15] The Process soon started to form chapters in other cities in the United States, Canada, and England, but never attracted more than a few hundred members. In contrast to most other Satanic movements, the Process was a missionary organization with a desire to spread its message. It was also an apocalyptic group, believing that the unity of the gods of the universe would bring about a judgement of humanity, which they regarded as the true Devil of the world. This is in keeping with the apocalyptic expectations that were prominent in several 1960s radical subcultures. Here too the old world and the old social system were often regarded as being obsolete, and a new world was expected to rise out of its ashes. However, these ideas were often primarily political, like the belief in a socialist revolution, and not based upon the same articulated misanthropy that we find in the Process. The use of apocalyptic visions based on Christianity was not uncommon, even if the use was very heterodox and even the more political movements were partially inspired by the images of a day of judgement.

The old, corrupt world had to go, and the Process Church set out to accomplish this by uniting the divided forces of the universe, represented by Christ and Satan. In their missionary activities, members originally dressed in black robes with emblems of the Christian cross and a silver medallion of a goat head representing Satan. They also became famous for always having large German Shepherds with them.[16] In the 1970s, members of the Process Church visited Charles Manson for an interview for a death-themed issue of their magazine.[17] This led to accusations of a deeper connection between the Process and Manson, allegations that were further exploited in Vincent Bugliosi's sensationalist book *Helter Skelter* (1974). Bugliosi was Charles Manson's prosecutor and claimed that Manson was inspired by the teachings of the Process Church. The Process sued Bugliosi and won, and later editions of the book deleted these references.[18] This did not prevent the Process from gaining a sinister reputation. The combination of allegations of Satanism and connections to Charles Manson created a dark image that was hard to shake off, and the Process started to experience an increasing pressure from their

social surroundings.

In 1974, Robert DeGrimston was removed from the office of Teacher by the Council of Masters (that is, the board of directors of the Process), and his teachings about the unity of Christ and Satan were expunged from the Process Church. While Lucifer is just quietly dropped from the pantheon, Satan and Christ were ritually exorcised, and there are descriptions of members going from house to house to expel the influence of these forces. Jehovah was the only deity that now remained.[19] The motive for this is difficult to ascertain. One hypothetical explanation could be the increased hostility the movement experienced from the public. Another reason might be the strong connection between the teachings on the unity of the gods and the individual Robert DeGrimston, and after he became expelled from the organization his theology logically suffered a similar faith. From now on, Jehovah was the only god that seemed to matter to Mary Ann, and the organization went through several name changes. For a period they called themselves the Foundation Faith of the Millennium.[20] The Process Church as a semi-Satanic organization ceased to exist in 1974, when the leadership passed to Mary Ann DeGrimston and she divorced her husband. After existing as a monotheistic movement oriented toward Jehovah for a couple of decades, all religious aspects were removed in the 1990s. The remains of Foundation Faith under Mary Ann's leadership were transformed to the Best Friends Animal Society, today one of the largest no-kill shelters in America, located in Kanab, Utah.[21] Over the years there has been media coverage of the background of the Best Friends Animal Society, but they have generally existed without much controversy.

Robert DeGrimston attempted to restart the Process Church in its original form after he had been expelled, but his attempts never achieved any lasting success. In 1979, he moved to Staten Island, took an office job, and disappeared from the public view.[22] Mary Ann DeGrimston (now dePeyer) died in 2005.

"The Gods on War" (1967) and "The Gods and Their People" (1970)

Origin

The texts reproduced here, “The Gods on War” and “The Gods and Their People,” were originally published in 1967 and 1970, respectively. The two texts were distributed internally within the Process Church and were written as a form of revelation explaining the doctrine of the gods of the universe and of Christ as the unifier of the gods. The intended audience seems therefore to have been members of the Process Church. Both texts were written by Robert DeGrimston, who was the primary theologian for the Process until 1974.

Content

The texts express the foundational beliefs of the Process Church, each of the gods being offered their own chapter explaining their nature and the nature of their followers. The Process developed a highly complex and dynamic theology that embraced apocalyptic expectations, psychology, and mysticism, professing belief in one transcendent God that represented the all, or totality, “the sum total of all things.” Below this abstract God stood three definable deities: Jehovah, Lucifer, and Satan. These gods ruled the universe in conflict with one another. Humans were part of this divine triad, each person belonging to one of the gods based on the nature of his or her personality. Everyone has aspects of all the gods within themselves, but one is always dominant. The relationship among the internal aspects of the divine creates mental and spiritual tension and conflict within the psyche. The gods are presented as:

> 1.4 JEHOVAH, the wrathful God of vengeance and retribution, demands discipline, courage and ruthlessness, and a single-minded dedication to duty, purity and self-denial. All of us feel these demands to a degree; some more strongly than others.
>
> 1.5 LUCIFER, the Light Bearer, urges us to enjoy life to the full, to value success in human terms, to be gentle kind and loving, and to live in peace and harmony with one another. Man’s apparent inability to value success without descending into greed, jealousy and an exaggerated sense of his own importance, has brought the God Lucifer into disrepute. He has become mistakenly identified with SATAN.
>
> 1.6 SATAN, the receiver of transcendent souls and corrupted bodies, instills in us two directly opposite qualities; at one end an urge to rise above all human and physical needs and appetites, to become all soul and no body, and at the other end a desire to sink BENEATH all human codes of behavior, and to wallow in a morass of violence, lunacy and excessive physical indulgence. But it is the lower end of SATAN’s nature that men fear, which is why SATAN, by whatever name, is seen as the Adversary.
>
> 1.7 And between these Three Great Gods and man, is an entire Hierarchy of Gods and Beings and Superbeings and Angels and Archangels and Demons and Fiends and Archfiends and Devils and Archdevils and Elementals and Fallen Angels and Watchers.[23]

From this, the Process developed a belief that one should develop this divine nature and act according to the doctrines of one's god. The Satanist should, for example, be anti-social, living outside of society and in opposition to it. The Luciferian would be driven by not only pleasure but also idealism, and the Jehovaite by discipline and order. Beyond these three gods is Christ, who is their emissary and unifier. Later, Christ became more of a fourth god. Members would often be seen as combinations of the gods, like Jehovah/Satan, Lucifer/Satan, Lucifer/Christ, Satan/Christ, and so forth.[24] All these gods are in a state of conflict that will be resolved by the unity of Christ and Satan, which will come about when Christ, in accordance with his nature, forgives his enemy, Satan. When Christ and Satan are united, Jehovah and Lucifer will be united and the world will end and be judged. The meaning of this future judgement is somewhat unclear. In the final part of "The Gods on War" we read:

> 1.14 And that matter is the fact of the End. The End of the world as we know it; the End of human kind as we know it; the End of human values as we know them; the End of human endeavours, human creations, human ambitions, human patterns of life, human conventions, human laws and human customs, as we know them. On one thing the Gods are in agreement. All these shall be destroyed, to make way for a New Age and a New Way of Life.
>
> 1.15 Humanity as a whole will not rise above its conflicts. Even if it were to do so it would still destroy all the physical, social and moral structures which it has created, because it would see their total invalidity. But it will not; so the destruction will take place in a chaos and confusion of ignorance, with the vast majority still clinging desperately to their hollow materialistic dreams, even in the depths of their final despair; whilst the few who do rise above the conflicts, will stand aside, separated from the mass, united not within but without the man-made structures of the human game, and linked to a new reality founded not on the laws of men but on the Laws of GOD.[25]

While the gods represent different ways of life, all of them to a certain extent symbolize a path that exists outside of conventional society, and the true evil is surrendering to conventional society. In contrast to the gods, we find the archetypal figure of John Grey, who represents hypocrisy and convention. "The Way of the Grey" is seen as a form of trap, comparable to the Gnostic notion of the *hylics*, those who were the lowest of humans, trapped in matter. The apocalyptic ideas expressed by the Process are often vague, but there are references to an increasing societal chaos, something the gods themselves demand. It is by rejecting this, seeking to prolong the existence of conventional society, or by standing outside of the conflict one becomes a part of the "Way of the Grey."[26] In that sense, the Process could embrace

different forms of extremism, from both the right and left, as all were part of going against the "Grey."[27] It is difficult to ascertain if the gods were perceived as external to the subjective mind, and members seem to have had different views regarding this question. The gods were, however, clearly seen as being reflected in the individual members. Interestingly, Satan was at times presented as female and Christ as male.[28] This was, however, not a fixed representation, and gender seems to have been somewhat fluid as persons of all genders could personify Satan or Christ, or their combination.

Satan was often seen as a force of separation, cutting Jehovah off from Lucifer and creating conflict within the mind but also separating Satan from him- or herself.[29] In "The Gods on War," Satan presents the following explanation:

> For I, SATAN, embody both lowest and highest. I am the God of both Ultimate Destruction and Ultimate Creation. Mine are the hideous black demons of the Pit, and Mine also are the white angelic hordes that transcend Heaven itself.[30]

The Process Church created a unique form of religion that was still very much a part of the zeitgeist of the late 1960s. As discussed above, dreams of a coming apocalypse that would rid the world of the old order were very much in vogue. As the 1960s moved into the 1970s and the Summer of Love ended, an increasing number of people started to feel that the new order would not be achieved through peace alone. The Manson family became a symbol of the dark side of the 1960s, but they were not alone. Political radical groups like the Weather Underground and the Black Panthers gained attention and created the perception of an America on the verge of a violent uprising, even if this was mostly a product of sensationalist mass-media reports and not an actual reality. Most did not, like the Process, attribute this to supernatural forces, but the rhetoric of violence and anti-establishment ideologies were clearly a part of a larger trend.

Genre and Audience

Both texts are so-called revealed texts, structured as communications from the gods to humanity, and have the appearance of transcripts of the words of the gods. While the language and style differ, the content of the texts can be compared to the content of articles from *The Process*, the group's magazine, where the presentation is more popular in tone, oriented to people who are

unfamiliar with Process Church beliefs.

Reception and Influence

After the expulsion of Robert DeGrimston in 1974, the Process Church gradually disappeared from public view. In 1978, the organization became the subject of one of the first larger academic studies on Satanism: William Bainbridge's *Satan's Power*. Bainbridge had joined the Process Church for a sociological study, and in his book referred to the church as "The Power."[31] This made the Process one of the most documented semi-Satanic movements in the 1970s. Even so, the organization was largely forgotten until the early 1990s, when the Process once again received publicity during the so-called Satanic panic in the United States. The serial killer David Berkowitz, aka Son of Sam (apprehended in 1977, and convicted in 1978), had a born-again experience in 1987 and became a devout Christian. Following this, he started to make claims that he had joined a Satanic cult in 1975 and that the murders he had committed were part of a Satanic conspiracy. While these claims have been dismissed in studies on the Satanic panic, like those by Gareth Medway and Robert D. Hicks, they were embraced and further developed by the Christian journalist Maury Terry in her 1987 book *The Ultimate Evil*. In her book, Terry alleged that Berkowitz had been a member of an off-shoot of the Process Church that was also connected to the O.T.O., claiming things like Berkowitz's use of British spelling as evidence.[32] This made the Process Church an involuntary part of modern-day conspiracy theories, and added to its sinister reputation.

Around the same time, interest in the Process Church grew within occult movements like Thee Temple ov Psychic Youth, whose founder Genesis P-Orridge (1950–2020) established a new version of the Process and started to popularize their ideas.[33] The Canadian industrial/electronic band Skinny Puppy released an album called *The Process* in 1997, inspired by the movement. Between 2010 and 2014, the US band Sabbath Assembly produced a trilogy of albums featuring modern versions of the hymns of the Process Church. In conjunction with this, rituals of the Process were reconstructed and performed by the band. The Process has also been presented as one of the influences for the Satanic Temple (see separate chapter in the present volume), whose founder Lucien Greaves appears in the 2016 documentary *Sympathy for the Devil?*[34]

The Process has had a generally understudied effect on contemporary music where the references are less direct. The organization was a source of inspiration for George Clinton and his band Funkadelic during the 1970s, particularly the 1971 record *Maggot Brain.* Clinton was in direct contact with the Process and also participated in the aforementioned documentary *Sympathy for the Devil?* Indirectly, the Process Church influenced the birth of the music genre neo-folk through the band Changes, whose recordings from the 1970s are often regarded as some of the first neo-folk albums. Changes was originally a house band for the Process Church in Chicago. In 1994 the band was restarted by its leading member Robert N. Taylor, this time without any connection to the Process.[35] Over the years there have been several attempts to re-create or restart the Process Church, especially online, but so far there is little indication of any success. Their main legacy can very well rest primarily in their aesthetic and theological understanding of the world, and their emphasis on transgression to achieve spiritual liberation.

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Excerpts from The Process Church of the Final Judgement, "The Gods and Their People" (1967)

1.1 CONSCIOUSLY or unconsciously, apathetically, half-heartedly, enthusiastically or fanatically, under countless other names than those by which we know Them, and under innumerable disguises and descriptions, men have followed the three Great Gods of the Universe ever since the Creation.[36] Each one according to his nature.

1.2 For the three Gods represent three basic human patterns of reality. Within the framework of each pattern there are countless variations and permutations, widely varying grades of suppression and intensity. Yet each one represents a fundamental problem, a deep-rooted driving force, a pressure of instincts and desires, terrors and revulsions.

1.3 All three of them exist to some extent in every one of us. But each of us leans more heavily towards one of them, whilst the pressures of the other two provide the presence of conflict and uncertainty.

1.4 JEHOVAH, the wrathful God of vengeance and retribution, demands discipline, courage and ruthlessness, and a single-minded dedication to duty, purity and self-denial. All of us feel those demands to some degree, some more strongly and more frequently than others.

1.5 LUCIFER, the Light Bearer, urges us to enjoy life to the full, to value success in human terms, to be gentle and kind and loving, and to live in peace and harmony with one another. Man's apparent inability to value success without descending into greed, jealousy and an exaggerated sense of his own importance, has brought the God LUCIFER into disrepute. He has become mistakenly identified with SATAN.

1.6 SATAN, the receiver of transcendent souls and corrupted bodies, instils in us two directly opposite qualities; at one end an urge to rise above all human and physical needs and appetites, to become all soul and no body,

all spirit and no mind, and at the other end a desire to sink *beneath* all human values, all standards of morality, all ethics, all human codes of behavior, and to wallow in a morass of violence, lunacy and excessive physical indulgence. But it is the lower end of SATAN'S nature that men fear, which is why SATAN, by whatever name, is seen as the Adversary.

1.7 SATAN: Lust, Abandon, Violence, Excess, Indulgence: SUB-HUMANITY

1.8 LUCIFER: Enjoyment, Permissiveness, Harmony, Success, Satisfaction: HUMANITY

1.9 JEHOVAH: Duty, Discipline, Struggle, Sacrifice, Self-denial: HUMANITY

1.10 SATAN: Detachment, Mysticism, Otherworldliness, Magic, Asceticism: SUPER-HUMANITY

1.11 Problems and pressures from within. And we have a choice. Either we can face them, recognize them, accept them as part of ourselves, tackle them with awareness and understanding, and finally rise above them. Or we can suppress them, reject them, disown them, pretend they are not there, justify them, blame them on something beyond our control, hide from them and thereby ultimately become completely trapped and stultified by our fear of them. They do not go away, however deeply we may bury our heads in the sand.

1.12 And CHRIST is the Emissary of the Gods. He is Their link with human beings. Their incarnation, Their representative within the world. He stands outside and beyond the separate and individual patterns. He draws them together, seeing the pressures, knowing the problems. He is there to guide all of us who will follow Him, through the first choice, uniting us into a common aim. He is there to give us the courage and faith to face the problems, recognize them, accept them as part of ourselves, tackle them with awareness and understanding, and finally to rise above them.

1.13 The choice is ours. CHRIST and a path of vision and reality, sometimes painful, always intense; or anti-Christ and a path of blindness and lies, and the dull agony of fear that one day the truth will emerge. And it must.

[. . .]

6.1 LUCIFER is the God of love; the God of harmony, of gentleness. He is the Light-bearer, who seeks to lead man out of the hideous darkness of the world in which he suffers the agonies of death and deprivation, the anguish of

tortuous conflict. He desires for man a life of perfect balance, a life of understanding and love in which he may be master of the world in which he lives, and make it the garden of beauty and delight that in his heart he wishes it to be.

6.2 LUCIFER seeks to lead man into the soft and pleasing ways of a quiet unobsessive, guiltless, fearless, harmless self-indulgence. He abhors excess, which He sees as the inevitable product of demands for abstinence. He sees emotion as the prime validity, and the perfect freedom of its channeling into the experience of all worldly joy, as the ultimate fulfilment.

6.3 His is the scented road of sweet and unpretentious luxury. But also it is the road of action, of pursuit, of movement; it is a road of exploitation, of making full use of all that is.

6.4 LUCIFER'S road is the road of success. To Him success is life. The sense of achievement that accompanies success is the essence of life. It is the validation of having been created.

6.5 LUCIFER desires that man should validate his own creation, should prove the worthwhileness of his habitation of the world.

6.6 LUCIFER loves the world. He loves the beauty of it. He loves all the secrets that are inherent in it, and He desires that man too should love the world, that he should discover all those secrets and use them to become more and more at one with the world. He believes in human life, in human values, in human feelings, in human senses, in human needs, in human hopes, and in human fears. And He comes with gentle love to guide His people into paths where they will find the sense of ultimate fulfilment which they seek.

6.7 LUCIFER validates. He creates Tightness where there was wrongness. He heals where there was sickness, He makes beautiful what was ugly. He raises up what has fallen down. He creates success where there was failure, love where there was hatred, harmony and peace where there was conflict. He brings light into the darkness.

6.8 And LUCIFER calms the raging sea, He stills the raging storms. He smiles upon what is evil and corrupt, so that it becomes good and pure. He touches what is vile and decaying, so that it becomes clean and new. He breathes life into the dying man.

6.9 For LUCIFER is life. He is the light of life that shines in the darkness of death. And all who follow Him follow the joy of life and partake of the joy of living.

6.10 And where there is ugliness LUCIFER brings beauty to conceal it.

Where there is misery, LUCIFER brings the simple pleasures that can override it.

6.11 His is the beauty of nature, the green loveliness of field and forest. His is the subtle precision of the architect, who seeks to complement nature rather than destroying it. His is the sensitive perception of the artist, who seeks to communicate the wonders of nature rather than distorting them beyond all recognition.

6.12 And His is the ladder of worldly success, that leads to a sense of freedom within the bounds of human existence; freedom to have, to experience, to learn, to know the secrets of life, of which those who are steeped in failure deprive themselves.

6.13 LUCIFER encourages success. He leads His followers to the foot of the ladder and guides them rung by rung to the top.

6.14 And he teaches the virtue of precision. He advocates exactness, a perfect balance; like two notes in harmony, if one is even a fraction out of key, the harmony is lost and discord is the outcome. And with LUCIFER there must be no discord. Precision is His constant gentle watchword.

7.1 AND the true Luciferian follows in the footsteps of his God. He is the Light-bearer on earth. He is the idealist who seeks to right all wrongs, to bring happiness to a world of misery and deprivation.

7.2 He believes in success and the enjoyment of success. He believes in comfort and the enjoyment of comfort. He clings to the concept of basic human goodness. He loves the world and the people of the world, and his greatest wish is that all men should love one another, that men should live at peace, that there should be no strife or violence, no ill feeling, no conflict, only a soft and gentle harmony.

7.3 This is the Luciferian ideal. This is the star that the Luciferian follows; man at peace with himself and his fellow man; man at one with the world in which he lives.

7.4 And the Luciferian deplores the victim. He sees the victim as the evidence of man’s failure to create for himself the best of all possible worlds. His instinct is to lift the victim out of his misery, to give him the joys and comforts that he lacks, to reassure him, to take away his burdens and to heal his sickness.

7.5 And the true Luciferian, because he loves the beauty of nature, and sees in it the secret of human fulfilment, abhors the relentless march of science and industry which he sees as enemies of peace and tranquility. He

watches man use science in pursuit of profit to destroy the natural world which he has been given, and replace it with a synthetic world infested with unnatural pollution and disease. He watches man succumb to the dictates of materialism, where even his minimum demands go far beyond the provision of a simple human comfort and satisfaction.

7.6 He watches the ladder of success, which he believes all men should climb, go far beyond the point of attainment, far beyond the point of human ambition, into the realms of grasping avarice, where one man treads on another's throat to gain his ends, and where nothing satisfies because all is demanded.

7.7 And like his God the Luciferian loves balance, order and precision. He appreciates the delicate harmonies of nature, and tries to emulate them in his own way of life. He strives for perfection. And in this the demands he makes upon himself and those around him are great.

7.8 Although the Luciferian is permissive by nature, he abhors disorder. Unless driven by intense frustration, he is reluctant to exert a rigid control or exercise a harsh authority; however he likes to hold the reins—gently but firmly. His sensitivity gives him an instinctive awareness of the precise direction a situation should take, and his inclination is to be the one who guides it there—gently but firmly.

7.9 When the Luciferian leads, when he rules, when he holds a high position in any field of activity, his aim is to maintain constant harmony. He tries always to create Utopia. To this end he is liberal and permissive, seeking to eliminate conflict and disagreement.

7.10 He suffers agonies when his permissiveness leads to strife and violence amongst those who are less deeply concerned with the preservation of harmony.

7.11 Often his own abhorrence of conflict brings him intense personal conflict. His inclination is to be permissive; harshness and rigidity offend him. But at the same time his demands for perfection are often fanatical, and where discord is rife his permissiveness may be stretched to breaking point.

7.12 The Luciferian leader rules from a standpoint of liberal idealism. All too often he ends in a state of disillusionment.

7.13 The Luciferian wants peace not war, and he weeps to see the honeyed road of sweet success dive headlong into strife and violent conflict. This he knows is not the wish of his God, though it may be the test that his God provides for His people. The road of success should lead to greater harmony,

to greater love, to greater mutual understanding; not to hatred, suspicion and insatiable greed.

7.14 And the Luciferian is a lover of the arts; not those that express the hideous horrors of the world, the miseries of mankind and the cancer of human degradation, but those that bring out the essence of life, the essence of natural beauty, the essence of love and harmony.

7.15 The Luciferian believes that by expressing beauty we create beauty, by making images of peace we eliminate war. He believes that evil can be made into good through the image of goodness, that violence can be stilled by the presence of harmony, that hatred can be destroyed by the presence of love.

7.16 The Luciferian is the eternal optimist.

7.17 He lives by the philosophy of human love. It is his panacea for all ills. Love conquers all for the Luciferian. It inarches relentlessly across a world that is buried deep in the worship of hatred and violence; unharmed, unreduced, and leaving only images of itself in its wake.

7.18 This is the Luciferian dream. The conquest of the world by love; and humanity's return to the sinless tranquility of the Garden of Eden.

7.19 So the way of LUCIFER demands control. To maintain balance and create precision, control is essential. Not harsh and rigid suppression, which in LUCIFER'S eyes is an over-compensation for an innate *lack* of control, but the gentle firmness of a confident and knowing grasp of every situation.

7.20 LUCIFER controls. He maintains the subtle balance between scarcity and excess, between violence and stagnation, between over-intensity and neutrality. His balance is no compromise. It is too positively intended and defined. It is the perfect harmony of opposite extremes, and yet is itself an extreme, diametrically opposed to harsh or brutal conflict.

10.1 SATAN is the Great God of Ultimate Destruction.

10.2 He stands beyond the gates of the human game, and awaits the blast of the trumpet that heralds the End.

10.3 For He is the End. He is the Bringer of Doom. And His reach extends from the highest pinnacles of Heaven right down into the very depths of Hell.

10.4 For He spans the Universe. He is the soul and the body of the Universe, and between the soul and the body lies the mind.

10.5 His creations are the throngs of Archangels that stand at the summit of all existence, and the crawling hideous monsters of the Pit that writhe in the swirling darkness of the Bottomless Void. And between the two is the

world of men.

10.6 And within the world of men the Lord SATAN spans from pole to pole; the ruler of extremes; leaving in between, the life of human conflict which the “normal” man endures; the equal battle of the two- poled mind, by which he maintains a tortured equilibrium.

10.7 And SATAN rules that which is outside the conflict of the mind, either below it or above. He has no part of that which lies within it.

10.8 He rules the regions of the mind unhinged. He rules insanity. His people are those who have blindly escaped from human reality and its preset values, have either delved into the strange world of physical sensation, without the restraining hand of mental barriers, have plumbed the depths of sensuality, carried indulgence of the body to its limits and left the logic of the brain behind, or have plunged altogether into madness, have unhooked themselves completely from the dictates of a “normal” mind, and followed an extra-mental path that has neither judgement nor control for those who travel it.

10.9 And SATAN is master of those who take these roads. He is master of all who cast off from the even battle of mentality, and set out to explore the unvalued, undefined miasma of experience, that lies beyond the mind’s control.

10.10 He rules the body and its sensual needs, and He rules the mindless cloud of lunacy; both respite from the tortures of the mind’s uncertainty.

10.11 And at the other extremity, He rules the superhuman mindlessness of mysticism. He is master to the being in pursuit of the purity of spirit; the being who seeks to *transcend* the conflicts of the mind, to rise beyond the barriers of thought, to reach outside the limitations of human values; who does not sink in witless blindness, without judgement or control, into the world of insanity or sensuality, but rises, aware, controlled, unshackled, into the realms of mindless spirituality; the realms of supernatural vision and experience.

10.12 And SATAN is the God with whom the mystic finds his other world.

10.13 The world of men may call the mystic mad, for the world of men calls mad all who do not conform to its accepted patterns. But the mystic is *above* the cloud of mental anguish, whereas the real madman is below it. And the mystic mortifies his body, where the sensualist indulges his to excess. Neither conforms to the accepted human standards whereby the body is maintained; instead they span the field from one extreme to the other. And

both are ruled by SATAN.

10.14 SATAN is the ultimate of all things. He is the End and the Ultimate Destruction. Equally He is the Beginning and the Ultimate Creation. He spans the Universe—in Time. He is both the Beginning and the End; the God of Ultimate Destruction and the God of Ultimate Creation. And His two poles are separated by the presence of the Universal Mind that fills the Universe with conflict.

10.15 And conflict is the Essence of Time. So the Beginning of Time is SATAN, and the End of Time is SATAN; and they are divided by the Essence of Time, which is the conflict of the mind and the twisted torture of the human game.

[. . .]

11.1 AND the Satanist, like his God, stands outside the bounds of the human game.

11.2 He stands at one of the two extremes.

11.3 He is an outcast, because he does not fit the pattern.

11.4 He rebels against the world of human values, and attempts to separate himself from the conflicts of the human mind.

11.5 At the lower end of the scale, he is the pervert and the orgiast; the sensual wallower and the sadist. He delights in cruelty and violence. He revels in the twisting of all social norms. He finds pleasure in pain, and exaltation in paths of degradation.

11.6 He dabbles in drugs, and finds there satisfaction in the negation of the human mind, which he carries so unwillingly within his brain. For narcotics twist the mind out of shape; they dull it, or invert it, or turn it inside out, or send it spinning into space. And thus the Satanist escapes from it. Drugged, he can float away into a world that has no part with reality in human terms. He can find realities more pleasing to him. He can create realities, fantasize them, summon up every kind of other-worldly vision, while the ties that bind him to the earth fade into nothing and leave him free of the shackles of the human game.

11.7 And speed the Satanist worships also, for that too disorientates the mind. The motorcyclist who rides for the sensation, feels himself cut off from the world that stands still around him. His senses become blurred, the roaring in his ears and the wind on his face send his mind spinning. He forgets the inert world of men and replaces it with a world of constant movement, where nothing stays the same, nothing is solid and definite, nothing can pin him

down to a precise continuous reality. And that is SATAN'S world.

11.8 And alcohol provides another means of shutting out the agonies of mental conflict; another road whereby the Satanist escapes; another blurred miasma, senses dulled, thoughts vague, unreal and imprecise. In even the mildest of alcoholic hazes, the concrete facts of human existence can cease to be real and can be replaced by other-worldly fantasies and visions.

11.9 And danger is yet another way out of it; a life of constant risk, the life of the criminal, the life of the man on the run, and the life of the man who lives by violence, always close to the presence of death. Again the down-to-earth facts of man's circumstances, man's problems and man's anguish are forgotten and replaced with the immediate sense of threat, the immediate danger that fills the whole being taking all of its attention.

11.10 The Satanist lives by the maxim; "Nothing suffocates hope more than the ordinary passage of ordinary events."

11.11 Sex, violence, drugs, alcohol and danger; the weapons of the Satanist against the mind and all its human values and demands that threaten to envelope him.

11.12 And one other; insanity. More extreme by reason of its permanence, more conclusive by reason of the depth to which it goes, madness is the ultimate escape, the final retreat from the pain of man's agreed-upon reality; the Satanist reduced to lunacy to avoid the threat of being human; and lunacy in any form, as long as it breaks the being's contact with life as "normal" humans know it.

11.13 For such a life is not for the Satanist. He must not be bound by agreements of right and wrong, good and bad, success and failure. He must be outside the ordinary valuations of the human world, even though it means existing in a world of hideous fantasy, a world of death and degradation, despair and nightmarish terror, far beyond the level of man's conception of these things; SATAN'S world.

11.14 Satanists are the destroyers of humanity. They are bent upon the destruction of "the ordinary passage of ordinary events." They set out to destroy the pressures and realities of humanity within themselves; their minds, their conscious thought processes. But also, and more significant, they seek the destruction of what reactivates those thought processes; humanity outside themselves; the material, social, moral and economical structures of the world around them. They are drawn to violence, not only as another form of escape, but also as a means to destroy.

11.15 Violence appeals to the Satanist, whether or not he is actively involved in it, because it means destruction. Crime, particularly violent crime such as rape, murder, armed robbery and insurrection, fascinates him, again because it means destruction. He may or may not practice it, but regardless, he feels a strong involvement with it.

11.16 And apart from the active violent destruction, which a Satanist might practice or at least identify with and fantasize, there are the corrupting effects of his excessive physical appetites—again whether indulged or only fantasized—which spread out like a cancer to undermine the structure of society.

11.17 And the Satanist hates, and his hatred also spreads to add to the destruction; for by hating, he brings out hatred in others, and hatred is a prime destroyer. And fear too he feels more intensely than most, because of the nightmare world in which he lives, so he brings out fear in others; another prime destroyer.

11.18 Actively or passively, openly or secretly, the Satanist never fails to spread destruction of one kind or another.

Excerpts from The Process Church of the Final Judgement, “The Gods on War” (1970)

THE THREE GREAT GODS OF THE UNIVERSE JEHOVAH LUCIFER SATAN

CONSCIOUSLY or unconsciously,[37] apathetically, half-heartedly, enthusiastically or fanatically, under countless other names than those by which we know Them, and under innumerable disguises and descriptions, men have followed the three Great Gods of the Universe ever since the creation. Each one according to his nature.

For the three Gods represent three basic human patterns of reality. Within the framework of each pattern there are countless variations and permutations, widely varying grades of suppression and intensity. Yet each one represents a fundamental problem, a deep-rooted driving force, a pressure of instincts and desires, terrors and revulsions.

All three of them exist to some extent in every one of us. But each of us leans more heavily towards one of them, whilst the pressures of the other two provide the presence of conflict and uncertainty.

JEHOVAH, the wrathful God of vengeance and retribution, demands discipline, courage and ruthlessness, and a single-minded dedication to duty, purity and self-denial. All of us feel those demands to some degree, some more strongly and more frequently than others.

LUCIFER, the Light Bearer, urges us to enjoy life to the full, to value success in human terms, to be gentle and kind and loving, and to live in peace and harmony with one another. Man's apparent inability to value success without descending into greed, jealousy and an exaggerated sense of his own importance, has brought the God LUCIFER into disrepute. He has become mistakenly identified with SATAN.

> SATAN, the receiver of transcendent souls and corrupted bodies, instills in us two directly opposite qualities; at one end an urge to rise above all human and physical needs and appetites, to become all soul and no body, all spirit and no mind, and at the other end a desire to sink beneath all human values, all standards of morality, all ethics, all human codes of behaviour, and to wallow in a morass of violence, lunacy and excessive physical indulgence. But it is the lower end of SATAN's nature that men fear, which is why SATAN, by whatever name, is seen as the Adversary.

[. . .]

THUS SAITH THE LORD LUCIFER

I, LUCIFER, Proclaim the End.

> It is neither My choice nor My will that the End should be. But it is written in the annals of time—and none shall erase it—that man shall decide his destiny. And now the wheel has turned full cycle, and the moment is not far off when the sound of the trumpet shall herald the last move in the game.
>
> And I, LUCIFER, shall be there at the End. And those who have known the End and set themselves truly apart from the End, have proclaimed the beauty of life and the senselessness of violent death, those who have followed My road to the last, and have worshipped love in the very midst of hatred, they are My people and shall come to Me.
>
> But one thing I pray: choose not blindness.
>
> Choose not to be blind to WAR or to the imminence of WAR. See it, feel it, know it. Do not allow it to be reasoned out of your mind, rationalised into non-existence.
>
> Whatever choice you make, take not the blinkered road, the road of ignorance, the road that says: "All's well with the world and humanity. There will be no devastation." For therein lies the way to a hell that is worse than Hell, to a fate and a destiny beside which WAR itself is nothing but a gentle reprimand. For that road is more than a simple rejection of GOD. It is the very denial of truth, a blanket of ignorance cast over everything, so that life becomes a tortuous lie.

The man who says: "I spit upon GOD," finds retribution. But the man who says: "There is no GOD," when his lie is exposed, finds infinitely worse.

And so it is with the way of all blindness. When eyes that have been tight closed, so that fantasy can rule unchallenged, are finally forced open to the harsh light of irrefutable reality, then comes an agony so inconceivably

intense, that were I to describe it, you would become faint with the horror of its magnitude. And that agony, reserved for those who meet the Day wrapped in a grey mist of “rational” ignorance, is for all eternity.

So open your eyes and see and know, and make your vow in My name. For I, LUCIFER, bringer of light, shall not desert My people at the End.

Fear not the horror of WAR, but stand beyond it, rise above it.

There is beauty within the mind for those who will see it, love within the heart for those who will feel it, and peace within the soul for those who will partake of it. And I, LUCIFER, bring all these.

Mourn with Me the fate of the earth, the loss of the incomparable loveliness of all creation.

Weep for the destruction of man and the end of the human game, the degradation of what could have been dignity itself, and the humiliation of supreme magnificence.

Breathe sorrow for the willful devastation of all living creatures, as they flee helpless before the inexorable avalanche of total WAR, and are finally enveloped and consumed.

Bemoan the victory of man’s baser side and its legacy of ultimate disaster. But play no part in claiming the fearful heritage.

Detach; and condemn the inevitable conflict. Express the dignity of man in the very face of his final humiliation.

Display his strength at the very moment when his weakness triumphs. Show his beauty when there is little left but ugliness.

Make love your master when all men are ruled by hatred.

Create when all about you is destruction.

And when the last futility descends upon the earth and all is nearly done, show the degraded remnants of a ruined race, awaiting death in disillusioned misery and dark despair, show them the pride, the majesty, the noble strength, the courage and the swift vitality that man in the image of his God could have been.

And at the End, when all is finished and the game is lost, call upon the Name of LUCIFER.

And for those who live by the light that LUCIFER bears, for those who honour the joy that LUCIFER brings, there are other games to be played, other lives to be lived, other worlds, other ideals and countless other joys.

And they shall belong to those who worship life, and can rise above the horrors of death, even the death of all mankind together with the world in which he lives. And they shall go on with LUCIFER, and a new life shall begin with a new creation.

So choose whilst there is still time. Choose between Life and Death, to be free or to be the slave of WAR.

And if your choice is Life, then I, LUCIFER, shall rule your destiny, for you are Mine, your will is My will. And in My Kingdom is the essence of Life; My legacy is immorality.

For he who loves is beloved, he who grants life receives life, he who gives joy is joyful, and he who sees the beauty of this world and seeks to preserve it, is himself endowed with beauty and preserved. But he who destroys is in his turn destroyed, who kills is killed, who hates bears only the legacy of hatred.

For men reap only that which they have sown, and then in abundance. This is the Law of the Universe.

So stand apart from the sowers of death, the worshippers of WAR. And cherish the seeds of life in the joys of living.

And when the harvest comes, and those who sowed the seeds of slaughter reap their own irrevocable destruction, stand aside and accept the reward that is reserved for those who worship life. I, LUCIFER, shall be there to bestow it upon My people.

The world is dead, the human race destroyed. Long live the new world and the new creation, for it shall be devised of immortality.

THUS SAITH THE LORD SATAN

I SATAN, stand for WAR. I glory in WAR. I glory in the magnificence of man in battle, man struggling with life and death, man giving vent to his wrath.

I scorn the weak-willed victims of WAR, the hordes of helpless citizens, who cry for mercy as they are driven from their homes and from their lands. They are the fodder for the monstrous WAR machines, the fuel that the great engines of death devour in their relentless march over the face of the earth.

They deserve no better than their lot, for they have no strength or courage of their own; no will to rise and fight, no fire within their souls to drive them into battle. They were born to a futile death, a miserable death, a worthless feeble destiny of nothing. They were born to be trampled upon, to be cut down by the mighty sword of the conqueror.

And such is their fate, significant only as it is part of the game of WAR.

So waste no more time with crawling on your belly in the dust. Stand up and cast aside the trappings of a civilised facade. Throw off the cloak of meaningless respectability. Strip yourself bare to the roots of your bestial nature. Let the animal loose in you. Become as you are: the Beast, naked and proud, teeth bared and eyes aflame, your feet firm planted on the ground, your face towards your enemy.

Release the Fiend that lies dormant within you, for he is strong and ruthless, and his power is far beyond the bounds of human frailty.

Come forth in your savage might, rampant with the lust of battle, tense and quivering with the urge to strike, to smash, to split asunder all that seek to detain you. And cast your eye upon the land before you. Choose what road of slaughter and violation you will follow. Then stride out upon the land and amongst the people.

Rape with the crushing force of your virility; kill with the devastating precision of your sword arm; maim with the ruthless ingenuity of your pitiless cruelty; destroy with the overwhelming fury of your bestial strength; lay waste with the all-encompassing majesty of your power.

And stand supreme upon the earth; lord of all creation by the right of conquest. And burn what offends your eye; eradicate what spoils your pleasure; take all unto yourself and punish most cruelly and without mercy all who seek to stay your hand.

For the world can be yours, and the blood of men can be yours to spill as you please. And you can

have your pleasure of the world through violence and the wielding of the sword. And your lust can stride upon the face of the land, taking whatever it desires, and discarding the empty husks when you've sucked them dry.

WAR and violence are your heritage, and now is the time to stake your claim upon them, to unmask the lurking shadows of your fiendish soul; expose them, hold them like banners before you, and shout your battle cry before the world.

SATAN's army is ready in the field, and slaughter is the order of the day. For I, SATAN, am Master of the world, and My law is death. Who follows Me must ultimately conquer all. For I am the master of WAR, the lord of all conquest, and the ruler of all violent conflict.

Hear My voice, for the time is short. The ultimate phase of WAR is about to begin. Be there in the forefront of the line of battle.

Be not a worthless pawn, a feather blown by the wind. Be not still. Ask not for peace and rest, for these can be no more. And stillness is already of the past.

Seek not to be left alone, to escape the burning slaughter of the holocaust, to hide from the final wrath of the vengeful Gods. But rise and march to the center of the raging chaos.

Defy the cataclysm! Don your gleaming armour, and stride with the engines of death.

Watch the gradual spreading of the slow disease. See the lingering death of the latest phase of WAR. And revel in the agonies of men brought low, men deprived, men humiliated, men trampled into the ground, and utterly degraded to the point of dismal decay and a futile death.

Gorge yourself on the horrors of irretrievable loss; the miserable fate of the victims that still remain, the helpless bewilderment of their despair, the pitiful cries of their useless supplication, and the wailing anguish of their bereavement. And grind your heel into the face of their stupidity.

Burn the chaff of humanity! For such is its desire and its desert. And dance the dance of a dervish around the leaping flames.

Again I say: Release the Fiend within you!

Release the Fiend! Release the Fiend! And the Fiend shall conquer, and the chaff be burned.

The Fiend shall slake his monstrous lust upon the helpless body of the wasted earth. And the chaff shall be consumed.

The Fiend shall wield a mighty cutlass, and the land shall be lifeless in his wake. And the chaff shall blow as smoke in the wind of his passing.

The Fiend shall devastate the earth, and his mighty roar shall rock the heavens so that the very stars

shall feel his presence. And the chaff shall vanish and be forgotten.

I, SATAN, shall stalk with the Fiend. We shall stalk the earth together, lending strength to the flashing sabre and unerring accuracy to the speeding missile. We shall be on every battle ground and every scene of devastation.

And our might shall be on the side of the mighty; strength for strength, power for power. And to him who possesses, more shall be given. On him who destroys with power, a greater power for destruction shall be bestowed. And for him who massacres with strength, more victims for his ruthless slaughter shall be provided.

But he that has nothing, and wilts before the rising tide of WAR, from him shall be taken even the little that he has. For such is his desire and his desert. And even what strength he has to plead for mercy shall he denied him, and his tongue shall disobey him at the final moment, and he shall be cut down.

And the mother that pleads weakly for her child shall see it slain before her. And the woman that pleads palely for her miserable virtue shall be struck down and raped. And he that fearfully pleads for his life shall be cut to pieces.

THE final march of doom has begun. The earth is prepared for the ultimate devastation. The mighty engines of WAR are all aligned and brought together for the End. The scene is set.

The Lord LUCIFER has sown the seeds of WAR, and now weeps to see them take root and flourish in the fertile ground of man’s destructive nature.

The Lord JEHOVAH decrees the End and the violence of the End. He prophesies the harvest of monumental slaughter.

And I, the Lord SATAN, with My army of the damned, am come to reap that harvest, and to feed My furnace with the souls of the fearful.

For in the great cataclysm of the Latter Days shall the world be split, and man shall be divided. And those who are weak in spirit and mind; those who cringe and cry out to be spared; those who adopt the air of the victim, the sick demeanour of the lost and helpless; those who crawl and crumble, tremble with abject terror and complain that others but themselves controlled their destiny; those who bewail their sad predicament and disclaim all responsibility for their fate; they are the dross of the universe; the useless futile miserable dross, that stands for nothing, lives for nothing, aims for nothing and shall ultimately receive nothing. For they shall be swept away in the whirlwind of the great disaster; they shall be scattered like dust upon the ground, and then caught up in a mighty vortex and sucked into the depths of Hell.

And the strong and the mighty and the ruthless; creatures of the Fiend that follow him; they shall stand at the core of the raging chaos, spreading death around them and embracing it themselves like a long lost brother.

And those that die in the glory of battle, those that kill before they die, those that meet death as an equal and not as a pale grey supplicant, those that stay proud and strong, and die as they have lived, those that revel in the sheer delights of death, instead of fleeing helpless before its inexorable avalanche, they are My people; the men of SATAN, born of the underworld and reared in the dark chasms of the Pit.

And these shall be My Army at the End; rank upon rank of black-hearted angels from the depths of Hell.

And when the great holocaust of man's destruction sweeps over the face of the earth, destroying all before it; then shall My Army appear; streaming up from the bowels of the world and following in the wake of the all-consuming fire.

The land shall be black. No tree shall stand, green and elegant, rising from the ground. Here and there a blackened stump will mark the passing of a forest. All shall be charred and scorched, and nothing remain, save a monstrous festering wound that can never heal.

And the earth shall open, and Hell shall be freed from within.

And fire shall spring forth and cover the land; and behind the fire the Army of SATAN shall spread through the blackened world to occupy it.

All the hideous creatures of the Pit shall be given the freedom of the earth; and I, SATAN, shall rule the world in might and majesty as is My right. And Mine who fought and died or fought and did not die, Mine who took pleasure in the final cataclysm, who stood in the midst of the chaos and reveled in the might of WAR, Mine shall not be forgotten. For they shall have earned their heritage.

And the world shall belong to Me, for it will be Mine by conquest. SATAN in man shall have triumphed at the End, and the earth shall be My footstool.

And those who have walked with Me shall rule with Me. And those who have fought by My side shall sit by My side in majesty.

GO FORTH! Prepare for the Day of Reckoning!

And he that shall meet the day steeped in the blood of his enemies shall be raised up and magnified in strength and power. He that shall be found in the very midst of battle, reeking of death, lip curled in ultimate defiance, shall be reborn to rule immortal in the world of SATAN. But he that is seen to run and hide, he that is heard to cry out for mercy, he that collapses in helpless despair, all shall be doomed to endless torment for their weakness.

And the earth shall be utterly destroyed and the sky polluted, and darkness shall cover the land. Corpses shall litter the ground, and cities, laid waste, shall smoulder lifelessly.

No creature of the natural order shall be left to witness the devastation. But monsters of the Pit shall stalk the land. And My people shall be rulers of this world of death.

And from this scorched and blackened citadel, the eyes of My people shall look outwards to the Universe. And when the time shall come, I, SATAN, shall again gather My Army together; and with the power vested in My shattered world, I shall set forth in conquest of the stars.

And I shall spread terror through the Universe. And My people shall go before Me; and WAR shall spring up in every corner of the vast incalculable multitude of worlds that stretches beyond time itself.

And as I shall rule the world, and My people with Me, so shall I rule the Universe, and My might and My power shall know no bounds. And the stars shall be Mine and the planets also. By the incontrovertible right of superior strength shall the whole Universe come under My jurisdiction.

And I, SATAN, shall destroy the Universe. For My destruction shall reach out like a cancer from the earth and spread its taint of slaughter and decay amongst the stars, till all is destroyed, all matter dead and mutilated to unchangeable lifelessness.

Then shall I be free and all My people; when all matter is destroyed, all physical existence crushed to a formless pulp.

Then shall we roam eternity, unshackled by the burden of material creation. For when we cease to lie beneath the world of men, submerged in a morass of putrid flesh; when we have plumbed its depths, wallowed in its screeching senses, ripped it apart and thereby burst from its crippling clutches; then shall we transcend its boundaries and rise to the utmost heights of spiritual fulfilment.

For I, SATAN, embody both lowest and highest. I am the God of both Ultimate Destruction and Ultimate Creation. Mine are the hideous black demons of the Pit, and Mine also are the white angelic hordes that transcend Heaven itself.

I am the epitome of both death and life. I am the body in the depths of dark depravity, and I am the soul in the heights of sublime spiritual ecstasy. The legions of the damned are of Me, as is the great company of archangels. And when the bonds of matter hold Me no more, then shall I and My people, My Army, My legions, all My followers, rise from the depths of the blackness of the Pit and transcend the stars.

I am the body and the soul of man. Whilst the Fiend of the body is enslaved by the fearful mind, the soul is imprisoned. Only when the Fiend is released can the soul be free.

So I, SATAN, am come to release the Fiend, to let him loose upon the earth for the latter days, so that the world shall, end with nothing less than the ultimate destruction of total WAR.

And those who accept the End, and play their part, together with the Fiend,

in bringing about the End; those who stand proud and fearless in the midst of the End, and wield with Me the Sword of Ultimate Destruction; they shall rule with Me when humanity is dead; and after, seek freedom with Me in the conquest of the Universe. But those who seek to stay My hand, to chain the Fiend, to cripple the engines of death and prevent the inevitable End, they shall be doomed to failure; dismal, futile, worthless failure. For the End must be, and none shall prevent or postpone it.

So rise and prepare for the final battle. Stand proud in the monstrous presence of violent death, and sound the trumpets of WAR.
Invoke the cataclysm!

And on the signal, when the heavens burst and a burning, blinding, raging, all-enveloping fury sweeps the earth:

Release the Fiend!
And stride with SATAN's Army to the End.

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[1] An auditor is a person licensed by the Church of Scientology to use and work with their form of therapy called Dianetics.

[2] Timothy Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death* (Port Townsend: Feral House, 2009) p. 19.

[3] Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, p. 32.

[4] Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, pp. 39–42.

[5] "Dialoges from Xtul," in *The Process Church of the Final Judgment Documents*. Ruben van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) pp. 303f.

[6] Urban, *The Church of Scientology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011) for a presentation on the believes of the Church of Scientology.

[7] L. Ron Hubbard, *Dianetics*: *The Modern Science of Mental Health* (Commerce: Bridge Publications, 2007).

[8] "Dialoges from Xtul." Also quoted in Van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 303.

[9] Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, p. 20.

[10] Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, pp. 52–54.

[11] William Bainbridge, "Social Construction from Within," in *The Satanism Scare*, ed. David Bromley and Joel Best (New York: Routledge, 1991) p. 299. *The Sociology of Religious Movements* (New York: Routledge, 1997) p. 260.

[12] Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 304.

[13] Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 304.

[14] Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 304.

[15] Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, p. 20.

[16] Gareth J. Medway, *Lure of the Sinister* (New York: New York University Press, 2001) p. 106.

[17] Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, p. 92.

[18] Medway, *Lure of the Sinister*, pp. 106f.

[19] Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 305.

[20] Arthur Lyons, *Satan Wants You* (New York: The Mysterious Press, 1988) pp. 90f.

[21] Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, p. 22.

[22] Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, p. 22.

[23] "The Gods and Their People," in *The Process Church of the Final Judgment Documents.*

[24] Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, p. 54.

[25] "The Gods on War," in *The Process Church of the Final Judgment Documents.*

[26] "The Gods on Fear," in *The Process Church of the Final Judgment Documents.*

[27] Lujik, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 304.

[28] Bainbridge, *The Sociology of Religious Movements*, pp. 253f. Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 304.

[29] The Process often uses both male and female pronouns when referring to the gods. Bainbridge, *The Sociology of Religious Movements*, p. 254.

[30] Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, p. 290.

[31] William Bainbridge, *Satan's Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

[32] Robert D. Hicks, *In Pursuit of Satan* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1991) pp. 70–72.

[33] Genesis Breyer P-Orridge in Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, pp. 174–178.

[34] http://www.theprocessmovie.com/.

[35] "Interview with Robert Taylor" in *Hex Magazine*.

[36] The Process Church of the Final Judgement, *The Process Church of the Final Judgment Documents*, pp. 103–104, 108–110, 112–118.

[37] Wyllie, *Love, Sex, Fear, Death*, pp. 484–486, 490–510.

13

Anton LaVey (Church of Satan), Interview in John Fritscher's *Popular Witchcraft: Straight from the Witch's Mouth* (1972)

Cimminnee Holt

American Anton Szandor LaVey founded the Church of Satan on April 30, 1966, in San Francisco. Emerging from the counterculture movements of the 1960s, LaVey claimed to blend the discourses of science and magic to present a "rational" religion that caters to the "true" nature of humankind. LaVey's Satanism views Satan as a symbol of liberty, antinomianism, and Epicureanism, wherein the Satanic figure is a rebellious hero representing sexual freedom, intellectual curiosity, and unapologetic materialism. In what is arguably modern Satanism's prime text, *The Satanic Bible*, LaVey claims, "Man has always created his gods, rather than his God's creating him."[1] As this anthropomorphizing permits humans to worship themselves via proxy, LaVey instead proposes Satanism as a religion that centralizes one's own ego, wherein one's natural desires and emotions are not suppressed, but exalted as a primary goal for Satanists. That is, the ideal Satanist seeks to fulfill personal goals—professionally, personally, sexually, financially—without shame or apology.

The Satanic Bible outlines seemingly rational and scientific principles, yet wraps them up in esoteric, magical, and demonic language, to present a codified religion centered around the mythology of Satan. The Satanic imagery acts as a filter as well as magnetizer; it deters those unable to overcome the tremendous negative associations of Satan and draws those seeking provocative and iconoclastic symbols. His authorized biography claims: "The idea behind starting the Church of Satan was not to gain millions of dependent souls who needed activities and organized weekly

meetings to keep them involved. LaVey started an organization for non-joiners, the alienated few who felt disenfranchised because of their independence, and who pridefully adopted Satan, the original rebel, as their patron."[2]

According to his authorized biography,[3] Anton Szandor LaVey, née Howard Stanton Levey, was born in Chicago on April 11, 1930, and is a mixture of French, Alsatian, German, Russian, and Romanian ethnicity.[4] Raised in California absent specific religious upbringing, LaVey developed an early interest in the occult, reading grimoires and horror, and studying hypnotism and magic.[5] Inferring a link to the demonic archetype he was later to adopt as a symbol of his church, LaVey claims he was born with an extra vertebra at the base of his spine—a tail—which was surgically removed.[6] As a young adult, "Tony," as he was then called, supposedly befriended arms dealers, gamblers, policemen, intelligentsia, carnival performers, prohibitionists, and other "nefarious" characters, who taught him that "Everything is a racket, including the church . . . the crafty man figures out how to work the rackets himself so he doesn't wind up a slave to the crooked politicians and bosses."[7]

Eventually settling in San Francisco, LaVey became a well-known eccentric living in an all-black Victorian home, having large cats as pets.[8] He claims to have been a circus lion-tamer, psychic investigator, musician, hypnotist, and painter, as well as a paramour of Marilyn Monroe before her fame.[9] During his time as an on-call crime-scene photographer for the San Francisco Police Department, LaVey was exposed to gruesome displays of human brutality: dead children, bloated bodies, and victims of sexual assault. Exposure to this human carnage prompted LaVey to declare that the belief in a just god was a fallacy. He states: "There is no God. There is no supreme, all-powerful deity in the heavens that cares about the lives of human beings . . . Man is the only god. Man must be taught to answer to himself and other men for his actions."[10] LaVey's sense of personal responsibility emphasized *lex talionis*,[11] which became a principle in Satanic justice.[12]

In San Francisco, LaVey held Friday-night gatherings for esoteric pursuits. An unconventional mix of guests attended these "Magic Circles."[13] During these occult seminars a distinct worldview surrounding the figure of Satan crystalized. LaVey began to understand that those who rebelled against the conventions of society achieved great scientific and philosophical

advancements: “We needed a representative for that revolutionary, creative, irrepressible spirit within us. The single figure who fit the bill was clear to LaVey from an early point in his life; a deity whose rebellious, passionate nature had been described, either in awe or fear or both, from the dark beginnings of time.”[14] LaVey wanted his “church” to be fun and thoughtful, whimsical and provocative. He states: “We blended a formula of one parts social respectability to one part outrage.”[15]

LaVey’s biographical details are contested among scholars, journalists, Satanists, and detractors, as they have “exalted, belittled, discounted, corroborated, and debunked claims made by LaVey and the Church of Satan.”[16] His disputed history (likely) contains fact and fiction, which mirrors Satanism as a whole: it continuously blurs the line between practical Satanic ideas and esoteric ambiguities.[17] For LaVey, fact and fantasy (or science and magic) are not only compatible, but also meant to be manipulated. Amplifying the tension between them enhances his mythic status.[18]

Popular Witchcraft: Straight from the Witch’s Mouth (1972)

Origin

John Fritscher’s book, *Popular Witchcraft: Straight from the Witch’s Mouth*, had its first edition printing in 1972.[19] Its contents focus on contemporary American witchcraft, featuring women’s and gay men’s spirituality and witchcraft. Gender and queer studies are now common within universities and their social-science departments, yet Fritscher’s text was one of the first to examine the topics as part of a serious inquiry. Fritscher, a former Catholic priest trained in exorcism, introduces the 1972 edition with the claim: “In the poker game of American spirituality, the witchcraft card trumps traditional religion. No longer the silent minority, witchcraft is part of the liberation movement of sex, race, and gender that are transforming American popular culture.”[20] LaVey’s interview circles those key themes, and how they relate to religious Satanism. Fritscher is careful not to present his book as anti-religion, but instead representing a curiosity for the occult and its relevance to contemporary society, especially in terms of marginalized groups. The 2004 preface informs that censored facts and controversial statements kept off the record in 1972 have been inserted in the second edition, noting the shift in

social acceptance for certain ideas.

Content

LaVey's first claim is to deny the existence of a literal Satan, interpreting a Satanic "presence" as an exteriorized version of his own ego.[21] This idea is the cornerstone of LaVey's Satanism. Members of the Church of Satan view Satan as a metaphor for their own healthy ego. If Christian theology depicts Satan as selfish, prideful, sexually permissive, and materialistic, then Satanists, in turn, declare these positive attributes for a driven, successful, and satisfied person.

To temper blind hedonism, LaVey emphasizes a strong responsibility for one's actions: you cannot blame (or praise) the Devil (or God) for your successes, failures, or miscalculations. When LaVey lambasts over-eager occultists with the same vigor reserved for (what he deemed was) Christian duplicity—calling "white light" magicians a "sanctimonious cult" akin to Christian hypocrisy[22]—he is emphasizing his notion of Satanic responsibility, which attributes power to the individual, never an external force.

Selfishness, denounced by Western religions as spiritually polluting, is essential. Pursue your own desires, but mitigate them within pragmatic, responsible, and legal frameworks. This includes illegal use of narcotics. Fritscher's questions about drug use reflect the culture of the time, yet LaVey was firmly anti-drug, holding the hippie movement in contempt for its liberal use of mind-altering substances, considering them antithetical to magical acumen.[23]

LaVey targets Christianity's apparent duplicity in terms of human sexuality, as it (and all religion) denies and suppresses the essential carnal, animal nature of humankind. Fritscher, a historian of gay culture and masculine spiritualties, agrees with LaVey in a shared response for mainstream Western religion's marginalization of non-heteronormative sexuality.[24] Though Satanism encourages a free expression of sexuality between consenting adults, it specifically forbids rape, pedophilia, and bestiality.[25] For LaVey, the Christian suppression of sexual desires (especially those deemed sinful) leads to neuroses. Yet, unlike the "free love" movement of the 1960s, LaVey critiques the idea of forcing oneself into sexual activities that run counter to one's nature, especially for political

statements. Satanic sexuality, then, runs the gamut from monogamy to polyamory, asexuality to BDSM.[26] All sexual orientations, fetishistic propensities, and gender identities[27] are acknowledged as necessary aspects of human behavior, provided they are done with self-awareness and consent.[28] LaVey's statements on sexuality are thus a rebuke of both Christian sexual morality as well as 1960s countercultural sentiments.

LaVey claims: "Materialism is part of Satanism."[29] This references his focus on the importance of aesthetics and its use as a magical tool. Emotions provoked (in oneself or in another person) by the material environment are an opportunity for manipulation—a term nearly interchangeable with LaVey's definition of magic: "The change in situations or events in accordance with one's will, which would, using normally accepted methods, be unchangeable."[30]

In LaVey's system, there are two categories of Satanic Magic: Greater and Lesser. Greater Magic is ritual ceremony, operative rites to attain specific goals. The ritual script in *The Satanic Bible* is suggestive, not prescriptive, as individual Satanists are expected to adapt the aesthetics to their distinctive tastes,[31] yet the primary goal remains to obtain desired ends. Ritual magic is an "intellectual decompression chamber,"[32] a suspension of disbelief within the ritual space wherein one has a "theatrical and emotional experience."[33] Within the confines of the rite, an intense, passionate response provoked by material images, objects, music, and scent allows the Satanist to acknowledge deep-seated desires and concerns in a controlled environment. Invoking Satan (or other deities and mythologies)[34] provides the celebrant an emotionally powerful expression of extreme emotions, as it is easier to abandon self-consciousness via proxy; hence, Satan is considered "real" within ritual. After expelling the emotions, Satanists demand their desired goals or resolutions to the problem before closing the ritual. The crucial function of Greater Magic is to establish control over a problematic situation in quotidian life (outside ritual). Satanists, using the *symbol* of Satan, convey that they are their own religious authority and maintain psychological and emotional control of their own providence, as surveyor, maestro, manipulator, and creator of his or her own destiny.[35] Satanic rituals are, mostly, rites of autonomy.

Lesser Magic is everyday magic achieved through manipulation of others using a calculated aesthetic and deliberate sensorial stimulation. It is outlined

in *The Satanic Bible* but expanded on in *The Satanic Witch* (2003 [1970]). LaVey claims that a successful witch[36] uses sexuality, aesthetics, scent, voice, charisma, and wit in her arsenal of sorcery. Directed at particular (often male) persons, this orchestration of the senses relies of a performativity of gender stereotypes that "almost anticip[ates] Judith Butler in some sense."[37] That is, LaVey acknowledges that gender is a performance, yet, counter to the second-wave feminists of his day that claimed gender is a rigid, restrictive, and therefore oppressive social performance,[38] he offers that gender performativity and the inherent polarities between sexes are necessary for magical tensions. A successful witch can amplify and deploy this tension for her benefit: gender performance is thus a magical tool.[39] This performativity, however, did not necessarily have to correlate with biological sex.[40] *The Satanic Witch* was written as a response to second-wave-feminist and sexual-revolution discourses. For LaVey, far from denying women power, harnessing, orchestrating, and deploying gendered oppositions was the primary means to female empowerment.[41]

LaVey continually reinforces humans as "just another animal" (asserting a biological taxonomy that rejects loftier ideas about the nature of humankind), but counters this view with an esoteric framing that empowers the human animal to create their own value. If life is essentially meaningless in the cosmic sense—there is no god, afterlife, or destiny—then Satanists must choose to inject their own meaning into life: an idiosyncratic, aesthetically pleasing, and professionally fulfilling meaning. This way, LaVey designs Satanism not only to discard theism, but also to avoid nihilism.

For LaVey, understanding one's own psychology and that of others is a powerful magical instrument. You can manipulate yourself and others to achieve material, social, and personal ends. When LaVey states that "Man needs religion, dogma, and ritual,"[42] yet rejects the idea of God, he is instead offering religious Satanism as a solution to problems of the modern world: atheism enhanced by aesthetics, theological morality replaced with personal responsibility, stale science as rousing magic.

Genre and Audience

The book demonstrates the rising presence of occultism in American popular and religious circles. At the time, Ouija boards, astrology, spiritualism, yoga, and vegetarianism were all considered "cult" practices, viewed with suspicion

by the larger mainstream population.[43] Fritscher's book reflects a particular moment in American history, wherein new religious movements, hippies, the sexual revolution, civil-rights conflicts, and other counterculture movements became part of an ever-shifting society and so-called occult revival.[44] He correlates the popularity of witchcraft to a reaction to ostracized communities being labeled as "Satanic" or "demonic" by the larger mainstream society, and how these communities then embrace the occult moniker, redefining the negative association into a symbol of empowerment.

Fritscher's interview with LaVey is perhaps one of the most circulated and influential, as it captures LaVey just beyond the initial foundational years of the Church of Satan, on July 29, 1969. In the late 1960s, LaVey performed theatrical events to promote the Church of Satan, inviting press to Satanic weddings, baptisms, and funerals, and nude females altars were regularly photographed for tabloids and gentlemen's magazines. Satanism was presented as titillating entertainment. But by the early 1970s, LaVey and his Church of Satan were the focus of negative media attention that incorrectly associated them with the Manson murders. LaVey "became a lightning rod," with media relying on him to "explain the dark side of American culture."[45]

In subsequent reprintings, references and quotes of Fritscher's original interview with LaVey—in question-and-answer format—were altered, stripping Fritscher's queries, and instead presenting LaVey's text as a monologue.[46] In the second edition of *Popular Witchcraft* (2004), Fritscher restored the interview to its original format, granting permissions solely for the correct, unaltered version.[47] Fritscher describes an esoteric scene as he is invited into the parlor of LaVey's unconventional home: black walls and drapes, red ceiling, candles, a pentagram above an altar. Just past midnight, LaVey appears from behind a secret door, dressed in a black cape with red lining. Fritscher's straightforward approach to the occult and genuine interest in counterculture narratives ease the conversation between him and LaVey, with Fritscher musing: "Our months of correspondence paid off. We understood each other."[48] Throughout the book, Fritscher describes LaVey as kind, "absolutely charming," a "cultured libertine," and "one of the most intriguing men of the twentieth century."[49]

At the time of the interview, the Church of Satan's fifth year, LaVey was growing increasingly weary of the "nuts" attracted to Satanism, risks to his family's safety, and constant demands on his time. His cynicism intensified;

though it was certainly present in the early writings, LaVey's later works portray a man disdaining humanity for their reactionary, populist groupthink. The misanthropic sentiment threads throughout the Fritscher interview. The apparent camaraderie between the gentlemen is significant, considering LaVey was notorious for keeping council with only select audiences.

Reception and Influence

The Fritscher interview remains relevant as an engaging and significant portrayal of LaVey. Unlike other entries in this volume, we did not print a text authored by LaVey, choosing instead this seminal interview.[50] As arguably the founder of modern of religious Satanism, LaVey's ideas have widespread influence across the self-identifying Satanic and modern occult circles, even when he or the Church of Satan is viewed with contention.

Within a few years after the interview, LaVey withdrew from public life. He became disconcerted by constituents' "excess of pomp and black capes" in public spaces.[51] Lamenting their lack of subtlety and restraint, he states: "I was trying to present a cultured, mannered image and their idea of protest or shock was to wear their 'lodge regalia' into the nearest Denny's."[52] As the initial "public outrage and spectacles" were deemed no longer necessary, he reorganized the church as a "loosely-structured cabal for the productive aliens, not misfits who need to depend on a group."[53] The toss-up prompted LaVey to reexamine how merit was awarded within the church. He envisioned titles granted to members achieving success outside of church activities, in order to reflect their abilities to successfully navigate and excel at life. As a result, the most prominent schismatic group[54] was founded by once–Church of Satan Magister Michael Aquino, with the Temple of Set (see separate entry in the present volume). Aquino claims that LaVey secretly, like Aquino himself would profess to do, believed the Devil was an actual entity. LaVey's reaction to defectors was dismissive, as he reasserted his fundamental rejection of theism: "I held this belief in the beginning as I do now. If others re-interpret my organization and philosophy into a fundamental kind of supernaturalism, it stems from their need to do so."[55]

In the late 1990s, LaVey re-emerged into public life, and, with the advent of the internet, interest in religious Satanism proliferated. Multiple groups and individuals self-identifying as religiously Satanic maintained a presence online.[56] Though there was high turnover for online Satanic activity (i.e.,

individual and group interest surfaced and dissolved at a regular pace), the relevance of Satanism remained consistent. Coined the "satanic milieu," a section of the cultic milieu alongside New Age, UFO, neo-pagan, Theosophical, and esoteric subgroups.[57] The Satanic milieu has "fuzzy borders," continually incorporating and reinterpreting key terms and ideas from the reservoir of modern religious Satanism; "Thus the satanic milieu is a trend in popular culture. . . . a collective style and identity within satanic neotribes . . . and the reference points of the satanic subcultures that crystallize around distinct interpretations or manifestations of Satanism today."[58]

Quantifying Satanists is difficult. The current Church of Satan does not release membership numbers. Claims to Church of Satan membership[59] vary widely. In the 1970s, they range from 7,000 to 1,000;[60] in the 1980s, from 300, 5000, and 1,000;[61] in the 2000s, no growth since the 1960s,[62] 500–600,[63] to no more than a 100.[64] For all self-identified Satanists (including but not limited members of the Church of Satan): an unlikely[65] 1,000,000 non-specific "Satanists,"[66] or "no more than 1000,"[67] but is likely closer to an estimated range of 30,000 to 100,000.[68] Drastic differences in quoted numbers reflect scholars' limited data and access, which inhibits concrete appraisals of all practicing Satanists.[69] As *The Satanic Bible* sold 600,000[70] copies prior to 1993 and continues to be of interest to occultists, magicians, and other Satanic individuals and groups, LaVey's influence clearly extends beyond Church of Satan's membership.[71]

The current Church of Satan remains relatively ideologically consistent under its present leadership of Peter H. Gilmore and Peggy Nadramia, the High Priest and Priestess since LaVey's death in 1997. Modernization of the Church of Satan includes a regularly updated social-media presence, while maintaining a secretive membership body. The internet facilitates members with likeminded interests to gather for social or ritual purposes. The Church of Satan administration itself rarely organizes events, with a few exceptions.[72] Perhaps the most glaring difference between LaVey and Gilmore's Church of Satan is the public output of its members.[73] Gilmore or other Hierarchy members publish commentary on current events, and though the Church of Satan refrains from an official political stance, the emerging themes are atheism, freedom of speech, religious liberty, critical inquiry,

magic, separation of church and state, and celebration of carnality.[74]

The satanic milieu as a whole negotiates LaVey with tension, generally viewing the Church of Satan as an intimidator attempting to strong-arm journalists and scholars into their rigid definition of Satanism (i.e., atheistic). LaVey's ideas walk the line between the ephemeral and concrete, which contributes to his widespread influence, as self-identified Satanists within the milieu highlight statements of agreement (individuality, antinomianism), reject unpalatable ideas (anti-drug stance, atheism), and interpret ambiguities according to their own political, social, or religious proclivities. It is this very malleability that ensures LaVey's enduring influence on modern religious Satanism and popular culture.

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Excerpt from Anton LaVey, Interview in John Fritscher's *Popular Witchcraft: Straight from the Witch's Mouth* (1972)

I don't feel that raising the Devil in an anthropomorphic sense is quite as feasible as theologians or metaphysicians would like to think. I have felt His presence but only as an exteriorized extension of my own potential, as an alter-ego or evolved concept that I have been able to exteriorize. With a full awareness, I can communicate with this semblance, this creature, this demon, this personification that I see in the eyes of the symbol of Satan—the goat of Mendes—as I commune with it before the altar. None of these is anything more than a mirror image of that potential I perceive in myself.

I have this awareness that the objectification is in accord with my own ego. I'm not deluding myself that I'm calling something that is disassociated or exteriorized from myself the godhead. This Force is not a controlling factor that I have no control over. The Satanic principle is that man willfully controls his destiny; if he doesn't, some other man—a lot smarter than he is—will. Satan is, therefore, an extension of one's psyche or volitional essence, so that that extension can sometimes converse and give directives through the self in a way that thinking of the self as a single unit cannot. In this way it does help to depict in an externalized way the Devil per se. The purpose is to have something of an idolatrous, objective nature to commune with. However, man has connection, contact, control. This notion of an exteriorized God-Satan is not new.

My opinion of succubi and incubi is that these are dream manifestations of man's coping with guilt as in the case of nocturnal emissions with a succubus visiting a man or of erotic dreams with an incubus visiting a woman. This whole idea of casting the blame off one's own sexual feelings onto convenient demons to satisfy the Church has certainly proved useful in millions of cases. When the priest is confronted one morning by a parishioner holding a stiffened nightshirt, a semen-encrusted nightgown, the priest can tell him about this "terrible" succubus who visited him in the night. They proceed to exorcise the demon, getting the parishioner off the sexual hook and giving the priest a little prurient fun as he plays with the details of its

prediction on some pretty girl in the village. This, on top of it all, leaves the girl suspect of being a witch.

Naturally the priest can keep his eyes open as to who fits the succubi descriptions that he's heard in the confessional. Of course, the concept of incubi and succubi has also been used by people who have engaged in what they would consider illicit sexual relations. More than one lady's window has been left open purposely for the incubus to enter—in the form of some desirable male. This can then be chalked up the next day to demonic possession. All these very convenient dodges have kept Christianity and its foibles alive for many hundreds of years.

The birth of a Satanic child is another manifestation of the need to extend the Christ-myth of the virgin birth to an antithetical concept of a demonic birth, a Devil-child. Rosemary's Baby wasn't the first to use this age-old plot. The Devil's own dear son or daughter is a rather popular literary excursion. Certainly the Devil walks in the sinews and marrow of a man because he is the representation of fleshly deity. Any animal heritage, any natural predilections, any real human attributes would be seen in the personification of the Devil. Consequently the Devil would have offspring and be proud of them, antithetic as they are to Christianity. Instead of being ashamed the child was conceived in sin and baptized out of sin, the Devil revels in the lust-conception of his child. This child would be involved much more magically than one who was the by-product of an environment that sought to negate at first opportunity the very motivating force—carnal desire—that produced him.

Religious artists' desexualizing of the birth process (Christ coming out of the bowels of mary) has caused women to suffer childbirth pains much more than they need to because of the age-old collective unconsciousness that they must suffer this and the periodic suffering that comes every twenty-eight days. Both these are attempts to stamp out or discredit what is in the animal world the most passionate feelings when the animal comes into heat at that time of the month. The "curse" of the menstrual cycle is a manufactured thing, manufactured by society that recognizes this period as one of great desire. Automatically, we have overemphasized its pains, tensions, turmoil, cramps. This taboo is not just Christian. Women have been placed in huts outside many villages. Every culture has thought she'd cause more jealousy and turmoil at this time because of this increase in her passions. Male animals fight more when the female is in heat. Having been a lion tamer, I know even

the females are more combative at this time.

Christianity has put women at this time in more need of self-recrimination. This is the big difference between tribal customs and Christian: in the tribe, the woman is considered bleeding poison; in Christianity the woman is not only considered taboo, but she has to endure her pain as a “moral” reminder of her mortality and guilt. The primitive woman can give birth relatively painlessly and return to the fields. She goes through the physical act, but not through the moral agonies of the Christian woman. Such is the compounding of guilt. This kind of hypocrisy is my enemy number one.

I don’t think young people can be blamed too much for their actions and antics. Although they coat their protests in ideological issues, I think what they resent most is not the actions of older adults, but the gross hypocrisy under which adults act. What is far worse than making war is making war and calling it peace and love and saying it’s waged under the auspices of God or that it’s the Christian thing to do. Onward, Christian soldiers and all that. I think that the worst thing about Christianity is its gross hypocrisy which is the most repugnant thing in the world to me. Most Christians practice a basic Satanic way of life every hour of their waking day and yet they sneer at somebody who has built a religion that is no different from what they’re practicing, but is simply calling it by its right name. I call it by the name that is antithetical to that which they hypocritically pay lip service to when they’re in church.

Take for example, the roster of people executed for witchcraft in the Middle Ages. They were unjustly maligned because they were free-thinkers, beautiful girls, heretics, Jews, or people who happened to be of a different faith than was ordained. They were mercilessly tortured and exterminated without any thought of Christian charity. The basic lies and propaganda of the Christian Fathers added to the torment of the people. Yet the crime in today’s streets and the mollycoddling of heinous criminals is a by-product of latter-day Christian charity. Christian “understanding” has made our city streets unsafe. Yet helpless millions of people, simply because they were unbelievers or disbelievers, were not “understood.” They were killed. It’s not right that a mad dog who is really dangerous should be “understood” and those who merely dissent from Christianity should have been killed. At the Church of Satan we receive lots of damning letters from people condemning us in the most atrocious language. They attest they are good Christians; but they are full of hate. They don’t know if I’m a good guy or a bad guy. They

only know me by the label they've been taught: that Satanism is evil. Therefore they judge me on the same basis those people did in the thirteenth through sixteenth centuries. These very same people hardly ever get worked up over a murderer.

I think, in short, that Christ has failed in all his engagements as both savior and deity. If his doctrines were that easily misinterpreted, if his logic was that specious, let's throw it out. It has no place. It is worthless to a civilized society if it is subject to gross misinterpretation. (I'm not just protesting the "human element" in Christianity the ways the Christians do when something goes wrong with their system. I void the whole of the system that lends itself to such misinterpretation.) Why the Hell didn't the writers mean what they said or say what they meant when they wrote that stupid book of fables, the Bible? This is the way I feel about it.

Anybody who takes up the sanctimonious cult of white light is just playing footsy with the Christian Fathers. This is why the bane of my existence are these white witches, white magicians, people who'd like to keep their foot in the safety zone of righteousness. They refuse to see the demonic in themselves, the motivations Satan's Majesty and Nature has placed inside them for their terrestrial goal. Materialism is part of Satanism, but a right kind of materialism. Everyone wants to acquire. The only thing wrong with money is it falls into the wrong hands. This makes it a curse, a disadvantage rather than an advantage. The marketplace is full of thieves. Easy wealth may be something would-be Faustian Satanists would like to get a hold of. In my experience people have come to me after I had opened doors for them. They come back wanting to know how to turn "it" off as they have more troubles than they had before. Once I offer to people what they think they want, given a week to think it over, they get cold feet. Success is a threat. Threatened by success, most people show their true colors. They show they need a god or an astrological forecast to really lay blame on for their own inadequacy in the threatening face of imminent success. Man needs religion, dogma, ritual that keeps him exteriorized outside of himself to waylay his guilt and inadequacy. Men will always, therefore, search for a god. We should, however, be men in search of man. The man in search of God is the masochist: he is the world's masochist. There are more than we imagine.

In the beginning I may not have intended Satanism to evolve into an elitist movement. But experience has taught me that Satanism can be a mass movement insofar as its basic pleasure-seeking premise is concerned. You

build a better mousetrap, and people are going to flock to it. A pleasure principle is going to be more popular than a pleasure denying. I can't help attracting the masses. As for the people who practice a truly Satanic way of life, you can't expect the masses to transcend mere lip service to the pleasure-seeking principle and get into the magical state of the Absolute Satanist. The Absolute Satanist is totally aware of his own abilities and limitations. On this self-knowledge he builds his character.

The Absolute Satanist is far removed from the masses who look for Satanic pleasure in the psychedelics of the headshops. We Satanists are magically a part of all this surface. I realize what my magical lessons have done, the things I've stumbled upon. We necessarily spawn our neo-Christian masses seeking their soma through pills and drugs. Certainly I don't oppose this for other people who get stoned out of their minds. When they do this, the more material things there will be for me and my followers since all those people who freaked themselves out on drugs will be satisfied with their pills and will move off to colonies based on drugs. The rest of us, the Materialists, will inherit the world.

Actually, I'm very much opposed to drugs from a magical point of view, from a control point of view. I feel drugs are antithetical to magic. The pseudo-Satanist or pseudo-witch or self-styled mystic who predicates his success on a drug revelation is only going to succeed within his drugged peer group. His miracles go no further than his credibility. This type of witchery is limited. This, I say, despite the fact that the druggies are no longer just a marginal group, but are a very large subculture which threatens to be the New Spirituality or the New Mysticism or the New Non-Materialism. They don't realize the whole concept of witchery is manipulation of other human beings. Druggies are not manipulative witches. To manipulate someone you've got to be able to relate to that someone. Their idea of witchery is not witchcraft so much—in the sense of witchery being manipulative magic—as witchery equaling revelation of a spiritual nature. Their superego gets developed through the use of drugs. This superego can be the earmark of a new world of drones who, through soma, would attain superegos which allow them while so controlled to think they have superiority over those really enjoying the fruits of the earth. This is why as the leader of the Satanic movement I have to examine these popular movements in the culture from a very pragmatic point of view.

The point is there will always be, among the masses, substitutes for the real

thing. A planned way of life—not drugs—gets the materialist what he wants. There's nothing wrong with color TV and cars in the garage as long as the system which provides them respects law and order—a terribly overworked term. But as long as people don't bother other people, then I think this is an ideal society. I'm in favor of a policeman on every corner as long as he doesn't arrest people for thinking their own way or for doing within the privacy of their own four walls what they like to do.

We haven't been hassled too much by the law because we have so many policemen in our organization. I'm an ex-cop myself. I worked in the crime lab in San Francisco and I've maintained my contacts. They've provided for me a kind of security force. But all in all we have a very clean slate. We are very evil outlaws in theological circles, but not in civil.

How could we murder? We—unlike Christians—have a real regard for human bodies. The Satanist is the ultimate humanist. The Satanist realizes that man can be his own worst enemy and must often be protected against himself. The average man sets up situations for himself so he can be a loser. We Satanists have ancient rituals which exorcise these needs for self-abasement before they happen. We wreck Christians' tidy little dreams. When you have somebody rolling orgasmically on the floor at a revival meeting claiming an ecstasy, you tell them they're having a "forbidden" orgasm and they hate you for enlightening them. You've robbed them of their "succubus," of their freedom from guilt. They push their evilness on to us. In this sense, then, we are very evil.

I needn't send my child to a private school. Why should I when children are, in fact, all Satanists. She has no trouble at school. Ironically enough, the majority of our members are that often-attacked silent middle class. At least fifty percent of our members have children; the other fifty percent are not rebels, but they're not losers.

I was very liberal in my younger years. I would have been thrown into prison during the McCarthy purge had I been of any prominence. I was ultraliberal, attending meetings of the Veterans of the Spanish Civil War, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the Revisionist Movements of Israel's founding. This was all very liberal at the time. I was always for civil rights. I had Negro friends when Negro friends weren't fashionable. A man should be judged on his accomplishments, his kindness and consideration for others. A certain planned form of bigotry may be a little healthy. I mean, if a person is the worst that his race has produced, he should be prevented from using his race

unless he is a credit to his race, religion, whatever it is.

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[1] Anton Szandor LaVey, *The Satanic Bible* (New York: Avon Books, 2005 [1969]) p. 40.

[2] Blanche Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist* (Los Angeles: Feral House, 1992) p. 13.

[3] *The Secret Life of a Satanist* (Los Angeles: Feral House, 1992) is authored by LaVey's companion at the time of his death, Blanche Barton. She currently holds the title of Magistra Templi Rex in the Church of Satan, leading mostly a private life.

[4] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 15.

[5] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 15.

[6] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 22.

[7] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, pp. 26–27.

[8] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 78.

[9] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, pp. 30, 46, 72, 78.

[10] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 61.

[11] *Lex talionis* or *talion*: A "law that criminals should receive as punishment precisely those injuries and damages they had inflicted upon their victims" (*Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.* February 20, 2004; accessed March 19, 2017). https://www.britannica.com/topic/talion.

[12] *Lex talionis* becomes point number three in LaVey's document "Pentagonal Revisionism" (1988), which outlines satanic mandates.

[13] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 71.

[14] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 60.

[15] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 16.

[16] Cimminnee Holt and Jesper Aagaard Petersen, "Modern Religious Satanism: A Negotiation of Tensions," in *Oxford Handbook on New Religious Movements*, vol. 2, ed. James R. Lewis and Inga Bårdsen Tøllefsen. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) p. 443.

[17] Amina Lap, "Categorizing Modern Satanism: An Analysis of LaVey's Early Writing," *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) p. 86.

[18] Holt and Petersen, "Modern Religious Satanism: A Negotiation of Tensions," p. 444.

[19] The interview takes place in "San Francisco, midnight, July 29, 1971." Jack Fritscher, *Popular Witchcraft: Straight from the Witches Mouth*, 2nd ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004 [1972]) p. 3.

[20] Fritscher, *Popular Witchcraft*, p. x.

[21] Fritscher, *Popular Witchcraft*, p. 6.

[22] Fritscher, *Popular Witchcraft*, p. 10.

[23] Fritscher, *Popular Witchcraft*, p. 12. Anton Szandor LaVey, *The Satanic Witch* (Los Angeles: Feral House, 2003 [1970]) p. 10.

[24] Fritscher remains a prolific writer, artist, and academic of LGTBQ culture. See www.jackfritscher.com.

[25] LaVey, *The Satanic Bible*, pp. 66, 70.

[26] Acronym for Bondage Dominance Submission Masochism.

[27] LaVey's mentions of transgenderism are few, as he writes mostly from a male heteronormative perspective. When it is mentioned, LaVey appears to take as a given that, firstly, it is entirely normal, and secondly, that individuals adapt his writings to their own gender identity and sexual orientation Cimminnee Holt, "Blood, Sweat, and Urine: The Scent of Feminine Fluids in Anton LaVey's The Satanic Witch," *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* 4:2 (2013) p. 191 n. 1.

[28] While many New Religious Movements at the time encouraged a new range of sexual freedom, few included homosexuality and transsexuality, with the notable exception of Wiccan, neo-pagan, and some New Age movements, which are contemporaries to religious Satanism.

[29] Fritscher, *Popular Witchcraft*, p. 11.

[30] LaVey, *The Satanic Bible*, p. 110.

[31] Cimminnee Holt, "Death and Dying in the Satanic Worldview," *Journal of Religion and Culture* 22:1 (2011) pp. 38.

[32] LaVey, *The Satanic Bible*, p. 119.

[33] Peter H. Gilmore, *The Satanic Scriptures* (Baltimore, MD: Scapegoat Publishing, 2007) p. 221.

[34] Novice Satanists tend to invoke Satan in order to overcome any self-consciousness with ritual, yet over time Satanists choose mythologies according to their own personal response to the narratives, often focusing on deities that represent "demonic" forces, death and rebirth, or transformation (Holt 2011: 49; Holt 2017, 102–103). Holt, "Death and Dying in the Satanic Worldview," p. 49; Cimminnee Holt, "Playing with Art and Artifice: Religious Satanism as Total Environment," *La Rosa di Paracelso* 2 (2017) pp. 95–114.

[35] Holt, "Death and Dying in the Satanic Worldview," p. 44.

[36] LaVey directed *The Satanic Witch* at women to manipulate men, yet Satanists understand that such techniques can and should be adapted by men toward women, or same-sex dynamics. A recent publication by Church of Satan Magister Bob Johnson, titled *The Satanic Warlock* (Aperient Press, 2016), updates the techniques and expands on LaVey's ideas, mainly addressing males.

[37] Per Faxneld, "Intuitive, Receptive, Dark: Negotiations of Femininity in the Contemporary Satanic and Left-Hand Path Milieu," *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* 4:2 (2013) p. 205. Cf. Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40:4 (1988).

[38] Feminist thought has since sprouted numerous critiques, responses, and elaborations to the second-wave view of gender performance.

[39] Holt, "Blood, Sweat, and Urine," p. 181.

[40] Faxneld, "Intuitive, Receptive, Dark," p. 205–206. LaVey, *The Satanic Witch*, p. 154.

[41] Church of Satan members have various reactions to feminism. For a nuanced and informative portrayal of modern satanic feminism, see Faxneld, "Intuitive, Receptive, Dark"; for its historical significance, see *Satanic Feminism: Lucifer as the Liberator of Woman in Nineteenth-century Culture.* (Stockholm: Molin & Sorgenfrei, 2014).

[42] Fritscher, *Popular Witchcraft*, p. 11.

[43] Marcello Truzzi, "The Occult Revival as Popular Culture: Some Random Observations on the Old and the Nouveau Witch," *The Sociological Quarterly* 13:1 (1972) pp. 16–17. Demonstrating how, over time, certain newly introduced practices deemed suspicious become innocuous daily occurrences.

[44] Truzzi, "The Occult Revival as Popular Culture," p. 16.

[45] Fritscher, *Popular Witchcraft*, p. 4.

[46] This is how it currently appears on the official Church of Satan website.

[47] Fritscher, *Popular Witchcraft*, p. 225 n. 1.

[48] Fritscher, *Popular Witchcraft*, p. 4.

[49] Fritscher, *Popular Witchcraft*, pp. xv, 4, 181, 6.

[50] LaVey's three children hold the rights to his books, not the Church of Satan. The Church of Satan is notoriously reluctant to participate in academic studies, though this sentiment has eased in the past few years with the proliferation of scholarly interest that offers a variety of objective portrayals.

[51] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 123.

[52] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 123.

[53] Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 126.

[54] There were many, see Barton, *The Secret Life of a Satanist*, p. 127. James R. Lewis, *Satanism Today: An Encyclopedia of Religion, Folklore, and Popular Culture* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2001).

[55] Anton Szandor LaVey, "Hoisted by his Own Patois." Official Website of the Church of Satan. Accessed March 31, 2017.

[56] In the early years of the internet, this interest was observed in virtual chat rooms, Bulletin Board Systems, alt.satanism forums, etc.

[57] Jesper Aagard Petersen, "Between Darwin and the Devil; Modern Satananism as Discourse, Milieu, and Self" (PhD diss., NTNU, 2011). Colin Campbell, "The Cult, The Cultic Milieu, and Secularization," *The Cultic Milieu: Oppositional Subcultures in an Age of Globalization*, ed. Jeffrey Kaplan and Heléne Lööw (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2002 [1972]) pp. 138–152.

[58] Jesper Aagard Petersen, "Introduction: Embracing Satan," *Contemporary Religious Satanism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Jesper Aagaard Petersen (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009) p. 5.

[59] Unaffiliated Satanists are even harder to quantify, see Asbjørn Dyrendal, James R. Lewis, and Jesper Aagaard Petersen, eds., *The Invention of Satanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016). This entry lists mostly Church of Satan membership claims.

[60] Arthur Lyons, *The Second Coming: Satanism in America* (New York: Dodd Mead, 1970). Truzzi, "The Occult Revival as Popular Culture."

[61] Arthur Lyons, *Satan Wants You: The Cult of Devil Worship in America* (New York: Mysterious Press, 1988).

[62] Graham Harvey, "Satanism in Britain Today," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 10 (1995) pp. 283–296.

[63] Titus Hjelm, ed., "Special Issue on Satanism," *Social Compass* 56:4 (2009).

[64] Massimo Introvigne, "Le satanisme moderne et contemporain en Italie," *Social Compass* 56:4 (2009) pp. 541–551.

[65] The improbable number is likely influenced by the hyperbole of the Satanic panic, prompting journalists to incorrectly equate mass media coverage and public interest with membership numbers.

[66] C. Forsyth and M. Olivier, "The Theoretical Framing of a Social Problem: Some Conceptual Notes on Satanic Cults," *Deviant Behavior* 11 (1990) pp. 281–292.

[67] Massimo Introvigne, "Church of Satan." *Religions of the World: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices*, 2nd ed., ed. J. Gordon Melton and Martin Baumann (Santa-Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2010) p. 701.

[68] Chris Mathews, *Modern Satanism: Anatomy of a Radical Subculture* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2009) p. 160. Supported by Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen, "Introduction," in *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity.*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) p. 5.

[69] Reliable statistical data on Church of Satan membership is further complicated by Church of

Satan policies: it does not require tithing nor yearly renewals (Blanche Barton, *The Church of Satan* (New York: Hell's Kitchen Productions, Inc., 1990) pp. 67–68); removal from its membership is done by either breaking the rules or formal resignation (70); self-identified Satanists may never become official members, and thus scholars have few avenues in which to access them. Most Church of Satan members are deliberately quiet about their religious affiliation. For every openly identified member, several others remain secretive, going as far as never mentioning their religion on social media and distancing themselves from networking with its pages, events, or other members. It is not uncommon for members to have multiple social media accounts, to keep their personal, professional, and religious lives in separate social media circles. Cimminnee Holt, "Satanists and Scholars: A Historiographic Overview and Critique of Scholarship on Religious Satanism" (MA thesis, Concordia University, 2012).

[70] Chris Mathews lists that 1,000,000 copies of *The Satanic Bible* sold since its first publication, but does not provide a source; Chris Mathews, *Modern Satanism*, p. 54.

[71] Massimo Introvigne, *Satanism: A Social History* (Boston: Brill, 2016) p. 320.

[72] In 2006, a fortieth anniversary ritual was held in Los Angeles, and in 2016 the Church of Satan celebrated its fiftieth anniversary by holding two Conclaves publicized solely to members.

[73] Due to the proliferation of online content, openly affiliated members promote their projects on the Church of Satan newsfeed or public Facebook page, which includes art (exhibits, films, music, books, photography, painting, etc.), media (newsletters, podcasts, interviews, blogs, etc.), as well as advertising satanic paraphernalia produced and sold by members (clothing, jewelry, ritual accouterments, etc.).

[74] Individual Satanists' websites, blogs, and podcasts make overt disclaimers that they do not represent the Church of Satan (indeed, opinions expressed on member's sites often contradict and disagree with one another), but the presence of public content demonstrates that this minority religion proactively engages with social media providing quantifiable data for how Satanism is lived and understood by its members (beyond canon literature).

14

Michael Aquino (Temple of Set), *The Book of Coming Forth by Night* (1975)

Cimminne Holt

In 1975, the Temple of Set (ToS) was founded by Michael A. Aquino (1946–2019), an ex-member of the hierarchy of Anton LaVey's (see separate chapter in the present volume) Church of Satan (CoS), and Lilith Sinclair, a former CoS grotto master in New Jersey. Setianism, despite its schismatic beginnings from the CoS, forms a new religious movement with its own distinct ideas and practices. Aquino's leaving the CoS impacts the history of Satanism, as it, combined with LaVey's retreat to private life, resulted in a proliferation of Satanic religions in what scholars name the diverse and visible "satanic milieu."[1] As with other religious movements in the Satanic milieu, however, the appropriateness of scholars imposing a "Satanic" label on groups or individuals that reject it, as the TOS does, becomes a point of contention for practitioners and scholars alike.[2] Hence, though this entry and volume present Setianism as a "Satanic" religion, readers must temper this academic classification with nuance: actively lived religions can exist in tension with their academic categories. Setianism is placed under the Satanic umbrella not only because of its schismatic history with the Church of Satan, but because the group itself explicitly connects Set to Satan, Lucifer, and similar figures representing a set of Enlightenment ideals filtered through the Western occult tradition. In such a context, the "Satan" figure (in this case, Set) epitomizes antinomianism, individualism, self-awareness, and challenges to convention.[3]

Aquino joined the CoS in 1968.[4] He helped with church correspondence, alleviating the high demand of inquiries, and eventually became the editor of *The Cloven Hoof*, the organization's newsletter.[5] Aquino viewed his "true mission" within the CoS as to "destroy the influence of conventional religion in human affairs," and understood Satanism as an "unreligion" uninterested in mass conversion.[6]

LaVey was Aquino's "magical father" or mentor despite their growing divide on theological points.[7] Aquino disapproved of awarding titles in the

CoS based on material successes, a standard that failed to demonstrate esoteric knowledge; LaVey grew displeased with what he deemed as Aquino's "overintellectual" stance.[8] But their prime contention was on supernaturalism and the existence of Satan as an actual being. Aquino increasingly began to understand Satan as a spiritual entity in stark contrast to the atheistic—and sterile, according to Aquino—understanding of Satan by LaVey.[9] Aquino claims that the CoS "struggled . . . with the central, inevitable issue of the reality of the supernatural, or more precisely the metaphysical.[10] Conventional religions were "puerile myths" for gullible religious persons "enslaved by superstition," yet the magical "Workings"[11] of some Satanists prompted considerations of a reality beyond the ordinary.[12] Aquino writes: "We were not just play-acting; we had really opened, or at least begun to open a door which profane humanity had only vaguely imagined to exist."[13] LaVey and the CoS are credited by Aquino for unintentionally accessing a supernaturalism via its impassioned rituals, yet Aquino's desire to examine an esoteric reality beyond known parameters compelled him to resign from the CoS, and establish the ToS to pursue his goals unencumbered by atheistic CoS doctrine.[14]

Michael A. Aquino was born on October 16, 1946, in San Francisco, California. He held a BA (1968), MA (1976), and PhD (1980) in political science from University of California Santa Barbara, held an MPA degree in public administration from George Washington University, and was an adjunct professor from 1980 to 1986 at Golden Gate University, San Francisco.[15] In the US Army, he was a cavalry officer, then Psyops/Special Forces. During a tour in Vietnam in June 1969, Aquino experimented with psychological warfare, using amplified sounds (i.e., "demonic screams") to disorient the enemy.[16] He was stationed all over the United States during his distinguished military career, and retired in 1994, receiving the Meritorious Service Medal.

On leave in 1968, Aquino attended a lecture and a magical Working at the Black House, the headquarters of the Church of Satan, joining soon after, describing LaVey as charming and sincere.[17] During a deployment, Aquino wrote *The Diabolicon*, a prose text voicing poetic statements from eight demons,[18] who portray "God" as the true evil, and "Satan," being God's challenger, as actually good.[19] The document was written under duress of

combat, and even damaged by enemy fire.[20] He sent it to LaVey, who used it Black House rituals,[21] though it was never distributed until 1976 within the Temple of Set.[22] In 1973, Aquino was elevated to the degree of Magister IV° in the Church of Satan, and regularly contributed to church activities working as editor, writer, and senior coordinator for grotto activities in the United States,[23] and dealt with the "sometimes tumultuous membership 'in the field.' "[24] In 1975, when Aquino received a proof from LaVey for an upcoming issue of *The Cloven Hoof* indicating material success as a basis for degree elevation, Aquino felt that LaVey's "infernal mandate" had been revoked, and soon after announced his resignation.[25]

Aquino widely encourages philosophical development independent of his own ideas, to expand the growth and outreach of the Temple.[26] He asserts that since his esoteric beginning in the CoS in 1968, he became a voracious reader of the occult, consuming grimoires and books of outré content.[27] Apart from histories of ancient Egypt, the works of Aleister Crowley, Plato, and Milton's *Paradise Lost* heavily influence foundational ideas of Setianism, and contemporary members continue to expand on their understanding of Set. Aquino adopted the title Magus V° as High Priest and held this position until 1979,[28] then took the oath of Ipsissimus VI°, retiring his leadership role. He remained a prolific writer on various esoteric topics until his death, regularly updating lengthy Church of Satan and Temple of Set histories, and continued to give interviews.

The Temple of Set itself maintains presence and influence in the Satanic milieu. Select structural elements of the Temple of Set are borrowed from the CoS, such as organizing by locals groups in close proximity, called Pylons, and larger international gatherings, Conclaves.[29] Annual assemblies serve to reconstitute Setians as active and involved,[30] participating in workshops, sharing their progress, and performing rituals.[31] Aquino encouraged high-ranking members to form orders based on the individual interests of Magisters or Magistras. Some examples are: Order of the Trapezoid (the quest for the "Grail of Life"), Order of the Vampyre (for Romantic Satanists), Order of the Setne Khamuast (studies on magic from ancient Egypt), Order of Beelzebub (for comprehending and connecting with the "Black Flame"), and many others.[32] Other sections were reorganized based on perceived mistakes of the CoS. Authoritative power lies with the Council of Nine, which can oust

an unreliable or disloyal High Priest, if needed.[33] As an initiatory religion—self-defined as the "Elect"—titles are awarded based on the deeper esoteric knowledge, a somewhat unquantifiable assessment. The Temple is understood as a collective of individual magical bodies, each housing its own soul in a microcosmic Temple of Set.[34] Certain prime texts are revealed solely after an assured level of participation.[35] Aquino emphasizes that this is because select materials are hazardous—not secret—and must be handled with a level of caution: "Some truths of the Priesthood of Set can be dangerous if misapplied, just as a loaded gun in the hands of a child is dangerous."[36] For similar reasons, solely legal adults are permitted membership, as the young are considered incapable of fully comprehending Setianism.[37] Membership degrees range from first to sixth levels, although it is understood that most Setians reach solely the second or third level.[38] The Temple claims tax-exempt status as a legally recognized religion in California.[39]

In the early days initial contact was made through adverts in newspapers,[40] and members maintained subsequent contact through the newsletter, the *Scroll of Set*.[41] Reported membership numbers vary. In the late 1980s, members are "firmly Caucasian, white-collar, and middle-class, and tend to be educated,"[42] numbering around thirty or thirty-five in 1982[43] and forty active members a year later.[44] The Temple claimed around five hundred members in 1984.[45] In the 1990s, a 1995 study on Satanists in Britain claimed about fifty members,[46] and fewer than one hundred in 1999.[47] In the 2000s, numbers quoted are from seventy to eighty in the United Kingdom;[48] approximately five hundred in 2002;[49] three hundred;[50] and two hundred.[51] Recently, internet activity in Satanist forums assessed membership between two and three hundred.[52] They claim a racially diverse membership in North America and across Europe.[53]

Much like many religions in the digital age, the Temple of Set has adapted its dissemination of information. Apart from its primary website, there are podcasts (KHPR the Voice of Darkness; Daimonosophy), essays from prominent members, and webpages for various orders (though, as an initiatory religion, public information about orders is scarce), as well as Setian art and music.[54]

The Book of Coming Forth by Night (1975)

Origin

After leaving the CoS with a number of former discontented members in tow (twenty-eight in total, including six from the CoS hierarchy),[55] Aquino faced the challenge of creating something new. He decided to perform a rite of communion with Satan, asking for guidance.[56] On the night of June 21, 1975, Aquino sequestered himself, spoke a so-called Enochian Key,[57] and then sat down at his desk, compelled to "automatic writing" as though being guided.[58] The resulting text, *The Book of Coming Forth by Night* (*TBoCFbN*), describes a manifestation of an "ageless Intelligence of the Universe" that rejected the "Moorish" moniker of Satan.[59] It is a "sequence of realizations" from the ancient Egyptian god Set.[60] Aquino does not consider himself the author as much as the instrument for Set's revelations.[61] It is written in the first person as the voice of Set, who claims responsibility for Aleister Crowley and Anton Szandor LaVey's occult ideas, in order to "prepare men for that which would follow."[62] The original version was penned by hand, but in most material and digital reprintings of *TBoCFbN*, the font has a marked aesthetic difference—a stylized font[63] to amplify Set's voice as distinctive from Aquino's other writings. Short in length, it was originally printed in a larger volume for First Degree initiates, the *Crystal Tablet of Set*,[64] but later moved to the collected works, *The Ruby Tablet of Set*,[65] given only to Second Degrees. The *TBoCFbN* is also reprinted as an appendix in Aquino's history of the ToS[66] along with extensive explanations and commentaries on its symbolic, linguistic, cosmic, magical, and historical significance.[67]

Content

Aquino claims that Set appeared as an oryx-headed god of death and destruction, venerated by the ancient Egyptians, but since forgotten, and resigned to roam the earth. This Egyptian god, Set, dated back to 3400 BCE,[68] claimed that a new era had begun in 1904 when a guardian angel, Aiwass, appeared to Aleister Crowley, ushering in the "Aeon of Horus." This was Set's "Opposite Self," designed to end the era of "death-gods of men" (i.e., religions that focus on eschatological rewards or punishments, or "White

Light religions").[69] This era follows LaVey's Church of Satan as the "Aeon of Satan," wherein Set and this Opposite Self fuse together.[70] And finally, Aquino's Infernal Mandate from this ancient transcendent deity made him the steward of this new era, consecrating the Temple of Set to begin the "Aeon of Set."[71] In Setian cosmology, the broad universe consists of everything known or unknown.[72] Within this universe, the expanse of space and matter and energy is the "objective" and "natural" universe. Beyond this, individuals perceive the natural universe according to their own subjectivity.[73] Within this cosmology is Aeonic time (Aeon of Horus/Satan/Set), which is perceived subjectively and linearly in the objective universe, but also exists beyond time or synchronously.

A cryptic aspect of the *TBoCFbN* is the untranslated interpolations. First, Egyptian Hieroglyphics posited in a passage about LaVey,[74] which Aquino's latter commentaries translate as, "He did many glorious things and deeds as High Priest."[75] This statement locates LaVey as an imperfect but essential figure for ushering in Satanism and making it palatable to a wider audience. Second, two lines of an unintelligible handwritten note comprised of numbers and letters, followed by verses #74 and #75 of Aleister Crowley's *Book of the Law* (1904)—"What meaneth this, o prophet? Thou knowest not, nor shalt though know ever. There cometh one to follow thee: he shall expound upon it"[76]—the interpretation of which positions Aquino and the ToS in the true line of succession after Crowley and LaVey.

The *TBoCFbN* mentions satanic ritual magic only to dismiss it, stating instead that magical power comes from direct communion with Set, "The strength that is mine shall be the strength of the Setian."[77] The Temple of Set's numerous writings develop magical ideas, but "Black magic" can be summed up as "consciously self-beneficial, rather than evil."[78] "White Magic" is dismissed as false consciousness; altruistic magic is in actuality an act of self-gratification.[79] Magical efficacy is not attributed to deities, but instead a successful Working is meant to "break down the objective and subjective worlds" by striving to commune with our inner magical counterpart—defined as the Egyptian concept of *ka*.[80] This double of the psyche is dispatched unto the astral plane to execute the bidding of the particular Setian.[81] Individual Setians progress via magical Workings, esoteric studies,[82] and other stages to self-awareness (e.g., the practice of

tantric yoga).[83] Aquino conceptualizes "Lesser Black Magic" as the "influencing of beings, processes or objects in the objective universe by application of obscure physical or behavioral laws."[84] This includes the external, material ritual of psychodrama, stage magic, and political theater. Effective Greater Black Magic is an inner shift in perspective of the particular magician that changes their subjective universe "in concordance with the principle of Xeper."[85] If changes happen in the objective, external universe, it is an "overlay," and not considered central to the Working.[86]

Genre and Audience

The *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, despite being an important internal text, is perhaps not the most influential externally: its reach does not extend much beyond the Temple of Set. Aquino's Temple of Set and Church of Satan histories are likely far more read, by occultists and scholars alike. It is also rather obscure in nature; without context its primary ideas are hardly straightforward to the casual reader. But as the foundational text of the Temple of Set, its briefness encourages further exploration of its final word: *xeper*.[87] Xeper is an ancient Egyptian notion translated as "self-improvement" or "self-creation,"[88] "becoming,"[89] or "coming into being."[90] Aquino defines it as the "transformation and evolution of the Will from a human to a divine state—by deliberate, conscious, individual force of mind."[91] This ancient principle is a process of exploring one's own natures (light and dark) in order to become psychologically mature and powerful.[92]

Reception and Influence

Setians come to know Set through three paths: first, self-knowledge; second, Set's influence through history (such as the existence of secret societies, esoteric ideas, or events that challenged societal norms); and third, by communing with Set directly, a potentially hazardous endeavor.[93] The "Self" is experienced "paradoxically as a blessing and threat or as both the 'light' and 'dark' aspects of the psyche."[94] Individual self-development is the prime emphasis of the Temple of Set, and a cornerstone of Left-hand Path movements in general.[95] Aquino sees Set as a companion, father, or older brother to humankind, "Speak rather to me as a friend, gently and without

fear,"[96] emphasizing that worship or genuflection was anathema, as Set was the human "consciousness of autonomy and individuality."[97] This concept of the profound self-awareness is wide-ranging, as it corresponds to pre-existing ideas floating around in the contemporary esoteric milieu and "self-religions," which posit themselves in opposition to perceived imposed and indoctrinated religion: it is a choice they make as sound, consenting adults with the aim of self-awareness and self-improvement.[98]

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Michael Aquino (Temple of Set), *The Book of Coming Forth by Night* (1975)

The Equinox has succumbed to my Solstice, and I, Set, am revealed in my Majesty.[99] The time of the Purification is past. The fate of my Gifted race rests in balance, and I shall not recant my Word, spoken to my High Priest MehenPetTha in old Khem and now again to you. Proclaim the nineteen Parts of the Word, and vanquish thus the feeble and corrupt Keys of Enoch, which were but a shadow of my true Word and now are an affront to me.

I am the ageless Intelligence of this Universe. I created HarWer that I might define my Self. All other gods of all other times and nations have been created by men. This you know from the first Part of my Word, and from my manifest semblance, which alone is not of Earth.

Known as the Hebrew Satan, I chose to bring forth a Magus, according to the fashion of my Word. He was charged to form a Church of Satan, that I might easily touch the minds of men in this image they had cast for me.

In the fifth year of the Church of Satan, I gave to this Magus my Diabolicon, that he might know the truth of my ancient Gift to mankind, clothed though it might be in the myths of the Hebrews.

Even you, who delivered the Diabolicon from Asia, did not know it for what it was. But he that I had fashioned a Magus knew, and he thought often of the Diabolicon as he guided the Church of Satan.

Upon the ninth Solstice, therefore, I destroyed my pact with Anton Szandor LaVey, and I raised him to the Will of a Daimon, unbounded by the material dimensions. And so I thought to honor him beyond other men. But it may have been this act of mine that ordained his fall.

Were I my Self to displace the Cosmic Inertia, I should be forced to become a new measure of consistency. I would cease to be One, for I should become All. To make of man a Daimon, then, may be to break his Self-reference to the bounds in which his semblance must exist.

I cannot undo the hurt that has come of this, but I shall restore to Anton Szandor LaVey his human aspect and his degree of Magus in my Order. Thus

all may understand that he is dearly held by me, and that the end of the Church of Satan is not a thing of shame to him. But a new Aeon is now to begin, and the work of Anton Szandor LaVey is done. Let him be at ease, for no other man has ever seen with his eyes.

[Symbols in the original not included.]

In April of the common year 1904, I came forth in Africa as my Opposite Self and brought into being an Aeon to end the horrors of the stasis of the death-gods of men. This new Aeon was a Purification, to prepare men for that which would follow it.

And Aleister Crowley received the Book of the Law, and my Opposite Self declared him Magus of the Aeon.

But HarWer, my Opposite Self, is a strange and fitful presence. I, Set, am my Self distinct from the Order of the Cosmos, yet am ordered in and of my Self. HarWer I was when I was once part of the Cosmos and could achieve identity only by becoming what the Cosmic order was not. By HarWer I cancelled the imbalance, leaving a Void in which true Creation could take form as Set.

But, as I have said, I cannot destroy the Cosmic Inertia without having to assume its place. And so HarWer must exist while Set exists.

The Aeon of HarWer endured until the Equinox of the common year 1966, when HarWer and Set were fused as one composite being. And so commenced the time of Set- HarWer—known as the Age of Satan—which was to bridge the expiring Aeon of HarWer and the forthcoming Aeon of Set.

Truth there was in the words of my Opposite Self, but a truth ever tinged with the inconsistency and irrationality of which I have spoken. And so the Book of the Law was confusion to all who came upon it, and the creative brilliance of the Magus Aleister Crowley was ever flawed by mindless destructiveness. He himself could never understand this, for he perceived HarWer as a unified Self. And so he was perplexed by a mystery he could not identify.

And I, Set, spoke too in the Book of the Law—Aye! listen to the numbers and the words—

[Symbols in the original not included.]

–What meaneth this, o prophet? Thou knowest not; nor shalt thou know ever. There cometh one to follow thee: he shall expound it. And many of the Aeon of HarWer sought to read this but could not. Nor could the Magus himself, though he guessed rightly at its simplicity. It was said that every

number is infinite—hence each number or sum of joined numbers became merely the corresponding letter.

Even so the sequence remained unknown—and so, after its issue, to me as well. For, while I may pass free of the boundaries of time, memory of the future cannot exist.

Now it has come to pass, and the Book of the Law is laid bare—

Destined First Century heir—Aquino—breaking Keys by doctrines Anton LaVey—great Magus of reconsecration coming Year Xeper founding his rightful Priesthood—Set—true origin Volume AL.

Michael Aquino, you are become Magus V of the Aeon of Set.

I, Set, am come again to my friends among mankind—Let my great nobles be brought to me.

In Khem I remain no longer, for I am forgotten there, and my house at PaMat-et is dust. I shall roam this world, and I shall come to those who seek me.

Magus of my Aeon—Manifest the Will of Set.

Reconsecrate my Temple and my Order in the true name of Set. No longer will I accept the bastard title of a Hebrew fiend.

When I came first to this world, I gave to you my great pentagram, timeless measure of beauty through proportion. And it was shown inverse, that creation and change be exalted above rest and preservation.

With the years my pentagram was corrupted, yet time has not the power to destroy it.

Its position was restored by the Church of Satan, but its essence was dimmed with a Moorish name, and the perverse letters of the Hebrews, and the goat of decadent Khar. During the Age of Satan I allowed this curious corruption, for it was meant to do me honor as I was then perceived.

But this is now my Aeon, and my pentagram is again to be pure in its splendor. Cast aside the corruptions, that the pentagram of Set may shine forth. Let all who seek me be never without it, openly and with pride, for by it I shall know them. Let the one who aspires to my knowledge be called by the name Setian.

I seek my Elect and none other, for mankind now hastens toward an annihilation which none but the Elect may hope to avoid. And alone I cannot preserve my Elect, but I would teach them and strengthen their Will against the coming peril, that they and their blood may endure. To do this I must give further of my own Essence to my Elect, and, should they fail, the Majesty of

Set shall fade and be ended.

Behold, it is I who call you, because you are the guardians of the Aeon of Set, zealous in what you do.

The Satanist thought to approach Satan through ritual. Now let the Setian shun all recitation, for the text of another is an affront to the Self. Speak rather to me as to a friend, gently and without fear, and I shall hear as a friend. Do not bend your knee nor drop your eye, for such things were not done in my house at PaMat-et. But speak to me at night, for the sky then becomes an entrance and not a barrier. And those who call me the Prince of Darkness do me no dishonor.

The Setian need conjure neither curse nor kindness from me, for by the magic of my great pentagram I shall see with his eyes. And then the strength that is mine shall be the strength of the Setian, and against the Will of Set no creature of the Universe may stand. And I think not of those who think not of me.

The years of the Aeon of HarWer were confused, and I do not wish to think of them save as curiosities. But I wish to remember the Church of Satan and the Magus of that Age. Therefore let the years of my Aeon be counted from the conception of the Church of Satan.

And now, having looked upon the past with affection and reverence, we shall turn our gaze to the times before us. Think carefully of the Word of Set, for it is given in witness to my Bond.

Behold, O West, I have established my Aeon. I punish the enemies who are in it, placed in the Place of Destruction. I deliver them to the examiners from whose guard there is no escape. Lo, I pass near to thee, I pass near to thee!

Affix now my image as it was given to you, so that all who read of these matters may now look upon the likeness of Set. The Word of the Aeon of Set is XEPER—Become.

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[1] Jesper Aagard Petersen, ed., *Contemporary Religious Satanism: A Critical Anthology* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009) p. 226.

[2] See Kennet Granholm, “Embracing Others Than Satan: The Multiple Princes of Darkness in the Left-Hand Path Milieu,” in *Contemporary Religious Satanism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Jesper Aagaard Petersen (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009) pp. 85–101. Kennet Granholm, “The Left-Hand Path and Post-Satanism: The Temple of Set and the Evolution of Satanism,” in *The Devil’s Party: Satanism in Modernity*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013)

pp. 209–228.

[3] Ruben van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer: The Origins of Modern Religious Satanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) pp. 328–329, 356.

[4] Arthur Lyons, *Satan Wants You: The Cult of Devil Worship in America* (New York: Mysterious Press, 1988) p. 125.

[5] Lyons, *Satan Wants You*, p. 124. James R. Lewis, *Satanism Today: An Encyclopedia of Religion, Folklore, and Popular Culture* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2001) p. 256.

[6] Lyons, *Satan Wants You*, p. 126.

[7] Stephen E. Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2012) p. 377.

[8] Lyons, *Satan Wants You*, p. 126.

[9] Lewis, *Satanism Today*, p. 256. Lyons, *Satan Wants You*, p. 126.

[10] Michael A. Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, 11th ed. (San Francisco, CA: Self-Published, 2010) p. 18.

[11] "Working" is a term often used for "ritual" in occult circles.

[12] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 18.

[13] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 18.

[14] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 18. LaVey reacted to Aquino's defection in typical fashion; he considered it good riddance to people incompatible with the rational interpretation and symbolic approach of the CoS. LaVey comments: "I held this belief in the beginning as I do now. If others re-interpret my organization and philosophy into a fundamental kind of supernaturalism, it stems from their need to do so." Jesper Aagard Petersen, "Satanists and Nuts: the Role of Schisms in Modern Satanism," in *How Religions Divide*, ed. James R. Lewis and Sarah Lewis (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009) pp. 238–239.

[15] Lewis, *Satanism Today*, pp. 14–15.

[16] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 381.

[17] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 380.

[18] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 393.

[19] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 20.

[20] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 381.

[21] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 381.

[22] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 393.

[23] Lewis, *Satanism Today*, p. 14.

[24] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 393. LaVey's frustration with unstable persons attracted to the CoS is well documented.

[25] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 393. For LaVey, material success demonstrates application of Satanic magic and principles, in stark contrast to most occult/magical groups that view real-world success as irrelevant to magical advancement.

[26] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 384.

[27] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 44.

[28] The succession of High Priest/Priestess is as follows: Michael Aquino (1975–1979, 1982–1996, 2002–2004), Ronald K. Barrett (1979–1982), Don Webb (1996–2002), Zeena Schreck (daughter of LaVey; 2002), Patricia Hardy 2004–present). Granholm, "The Left-Hand Path and Post-Satanism," p. 219 n. 8.

[29] Lewis, *Satanism Today*, p. 258.

[30] Jesper Aagard Petersen, "Modern Satanism: Dark Doctrines and Black Flames," in *Controversial*

New Religions, ed. James R. Lewis and Jesper Aagaard Petersen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) p. 435. By contrast, other groups (including the Church of Satan) require no reconstitution, demonstrating difficulty in pinpointing precise "active" membership numbers for satanic religions.

[31] Bull Sentinel, "The Living Temple," *Xeper Austin: Bat City Black Magic*. Blog, May 28, 2017. Accessed May 28, 2023. https://xeperaustin.org/2017/05/28/the-living-temple/.

[32] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 404–405.

[33] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 398.

[34] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 381.

[35] Petersen, "Modern Satanism," p. 436.

[36] Petersen, "Modern Satanism," p. 436.

[37] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 398.

[38] Lewis, *Satanism Today*, p. 258.

[39] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 398.

[40] Lyons, *Satan Wants You*, p. 129.

[41] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 384. First contact via literature (pamphlets, adverts, etc.) is common for most new religious movements emerging in the cultic milieu at the time.

[42] Lyons, *Satan Wants You*, p. 130.

[43] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 385.

[44] Gini Graham Scott, *The Magicians: A Study of the Use of Power in a Black Magic Group* (New York: Irvington pub, 1983) p. 138.

[45] Susan Ainsley and David G. Bromley, "Satanism and Satanic Churches: The Contemporary Incarnations," in *America's Alternative Religions*, ed. Timothy Miller (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995) p. 403.

[46] Graham Harvey, "Satanism in Britain Today," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 10 (1995) pp. 283–296.

[47] Jean La Fontaine, "Satanism and Satanic Mythology," in *The Athlone History of Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*, vol. 6: *The Twentieth Century*, ed. Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark (London: Athlone, 1999) p. 105.

[48] Gareth J. Medway, *Lure of the Sinister: The Unnatural History of Satanism* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2001) p. 293.

[49] J. Gordon Melton, James Beverley, Constance Jones, Pamela S. Nadell, eds., "Temple of Set," in Melton's *Encyclopedia of American Religions* (New York: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009) p. 866.

[50] Petersen, "Modern Satanism," p. 435.

[51] Granholm, "Embracing Others Than Satan," p. 93.

[52] Massimo Introvigne, *Satanism: A Social History* (Boston: Brill, 2016) p. 350.

[53] Mattias Gardell, *Gods of the Blood: The Pagan Revival and White Separatism* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2013) p. 322.

[54] xeper.org (2012).

[55] Ainsley and Bromley, "Satanism and Satanic Churches," p. 403.

[56] van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 351.

[57] Enochian is the secret language of angels revealed via scrying, and transcribed by John Dee (1527–1608/1609). Enochian is widely used occultist circles.

[58] van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 351.

[59] van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 352.

[60] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 176.

[61] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 176.

[62] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 172.

[63] The specific name is Templar Heavy Font, a True Type Font, copyright 1986–1995 SWFTE International, Ltd.

[64] This volume contains an elucidation of the theory and practice of Black Magic, authored by Aquino, and further varied information such as protocol, initiation, and the ToS' orders, authored by multiple prominent Setians.

[65] This lengthy volume contains summaries of various historical philosophies, reprints of academic work on Satanism and Setianism, ritual scripts, and various essays of interest on magical and esoteric ideas.

[66] Aquino has written many editions of his ToS and CoS histories. The version referenced in this entry is the 11th edition from 2010.

[67] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, app. 2–4.

[68] Lyons, *Satan Wants You*, p. 126.

[69] van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 352.

[70] van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 352.

[71] Lyons, *Satan Wants You*, p. 127. Lewis, *Satanism Today*, p. 256.

[72] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 406.

[73] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 406.

[74] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 172.

[75] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 192.

[76] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 173.

[77] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 175.

[78] Lewis, *Satanism Today*, p. 258.

[79] Harvey, "Satanism in Britain Today."

[80] Lyons, *Satan Wants You*, p. 128.

[81] Lyons, *Satan Wants You*, p. 128.

[82] Ancient Egyptian histories are most prominent, but Rune Magic, Thelema, Kabbalah, alchemy, etc. can also be included.

[83] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 404. Jesper Aagaard Petersen, "The Seeds of Satan: Conceptions of Magic in Contemporary Satanism," *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism*12:1 (2012) p. 99. xeper.org.

[84] Petersen, "The Seeds of Satan," p. 100.

[85] Petersen, "The Seeds of Satan," p. 101.

[86] Petersen, "The Seeds of Satan," p. 101.

[87] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 175.

[88] Lewis, *Satanism Today*, p. 257.

[89] Lyons, *Satan Wants You*, p. 128.

[90] Lloyd Keane, "Set as Dark Self: An Analytical Psychological Interpretation of the Figure of Set as Found in the Public Documents of the Temple of Set," Paper presented at the Satanism in the Modern World conference in Trondheim, Norway, 2009, p. 7.

[91] Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 384.

[92] Keane, “Set as Dark Self,” p. 7.

[93] Keane, “Set as Dark Self,” p. 6.

[94] Keane, “Set as Dark Self,” p. 3

[95] Lewis, *Satanism Today*, p. 257.

[96] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 174.

[97] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, p. 174. Lewis, *Satanism Today*, p. 257. van Luijk, *Children of Lucifer*, p. 352.

[98] Paul Heelas, “Western Europe: Self-Religions,” in *The World’s Religions: The Study of Religion, Traditional and New Religion*, ed. Peter Clarke (London: Routledge, 1991) pp. 167–173.

[99] Aquino, *The Temple of Set*, pp. 76–81.

15

The Order of the Nine Angles, *The Black Book of Satan* (1984)

Fredrik Gregorius

The British Satanic organization called Order of the Nine Angles (ONA or O9A) is one of the most controversial and infamous Satanic groups of the twentieth century. In contrast to most forms of Satanism, ONA texts include references to and advocacy of certain criminal actions to further the group's end game.[1] Most controversial are the references to human sacrifice, and the question of whether these are to be taken literally has been much debated.[2] Little is known about ONA's origin, as the individual (or individuals) behind the ONA have consciously worked to construct a mythologized history for the organization. While ONA's own texts hint to an older tradition, most scholars agree that at least its modern manifestation is strongly connected to David Wulstan Myatt's (b. 1950) activities and that the first writings under the name ONA appears in the 1970s.[3]

While Myatt is usually considered to be the person behind the pseudonymous authorship of the most important texts of the ONA, for example, those signed "Anton Long," it should be noted that Myatt has always denied that he has any connection to the ONA.[4] It is also clear that Myatt is not the person behind the name "Christos Beest," who produced several of ONA's writings during the late 1980s and 1990s. Myatt is a complex character, who has been involved in esotericism, the British neo-Nazi scene, and Satanism, if the likely identification between him and Anton Long is correct.[5] In 1998 Myatt converted to Islam and began publishing radical Islamic texts, often oriented toward militant actions against "Zionism." Myatt officially abandoned Islam in 2010 and has since created his own worldview oriented toward a type of Hellenistic Pantheism.[6] Before his conversion to Islam, Myatt had been part of the more radical part of the small neo-Nazi scene in the United Kingdom. When only a teenager, he became involved with Colin Jordan's (1923–2009) British Movement, learning about more esoteric interpretations of National Socialism like the writings of Savitri Devi.[7] Devi, who believed Hitler was an avatar of God, is

often regarded as the founder of what would later become known as Esoteric Hitlerism. She mixed her admiration for Hitler with Hinduism, and a strong dislike for Christianity.[8] Devi would become a central source of inspiration for Myatt's later writings and the texts he produced for the ONA.

Another important source of inspiration for Myatt was Francis Parker Yockey (1917–1960), whose Spenglerian and anti-Semitic opus *Imperium* (1948) would have a profound influence on the ONA, particularly the idea of the Imperium as the final stage of Western civilization. Using terms from the German philosopher Oswald Spengler (1880–1936), Western civilization is called "Faustian," but in contrast to earlier civilizations it is described as polluted by Judeo-Christian values. According to the ONA, Western civilization will eventually give way to a new Aeonic civilization, a galactic empire which will transcend the Earth—but to reach that stage, a new god-man must be produced.[9] As the center for any Aeonic civilization also exists in physical form—the Western center, for example, is in northern Europe—the next stage can only be achieved when humanity leaves Earth.[10] The work toward such an evolutionary goal is one of the rationalizations for the anti-ethical and elitist approach found in ONA literature.

A recurring question in relation to the ONA is how to interpret their relationship to National Socialism, and how this relates to their ideas about "insight roles" and political infiltration in other organizations. If the arguments presented by scholars Jacob Senholt and Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke are correct, and Anton Long is the same person as David W. Myatt, then the ONA have a clear and ideological foundation in National Socialist ideas. If this is the case, their literature is best explained as a manifestation of post-war White Nationalism with all the references to clandestine work that can be found there.[11] Some texts from the ONA are also strongly reminiscent of the works of Savitri Devi, like the veneration of Adolf Hitler as a form of savior.[12]

Christos Beest, however, seems to present the use of National Socialist imagery as just one way of working and sees the ONA as "the only true anarchist group," merely using right- and left-wing movements for their own ends.[13] Senholt argues that involvement in left-wing groups probably is more aimed at strategic ends in contrast to involvement with right-wing groups, whose goals are more or less shared by the ONA.[14] In 1988, the ONA started to publish their magazine *Fenrir*. The order was most likely very small,

possibly having only one or two actual members. Beest stated in 1999 that there were only around ten people involved.[15] For most of the 1990s, the ONA went under the radar in studies on Satanism, and there are few references to them. One exception is Graham Harvey, who in 1995 did an ethnographical study on Satanism in the United Kingdom.[16] Harvey gives a similar number as Beest later would, but is even more restrictive and claims it is likely there are only around five members.[17]

In the winter of 1989, an article on the group was published in *The Black Flame*, the relatively recently launched new magazine for the Church of Satan. It dealt with what the author, Elizabeth Selwyn, saw as problems with right-wing extremism in the Satanic subculture in Britain. Selwyn mentions several organizations and individuals, including the ONA and Myatt.[18] The article is an early example of internal Satanic criticism against the ONA, and other Satanists started to question the ONA as well. One notable example was the founder of the Temple of Set, Michael A. Aquino, who in 1990 had a polite but highly critical exchange with "Stephen Brown" from the ONA. This exchange was later included in *The Satanic Letters of Stephen Brown.*[19]

In 1998, the anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight* featured a long article on Satanism and the British far right that included an exposé of David Myatt as the man behind the order. Myatt was also accused of having sacrificed animals, something he strongly objected to.[20] From the other side of the political spectrum, the far-right magazine *Final Conflict* published a conspiracy theory pamphlet called *Satanism and Its Allies: The Nationalist Movement Under Attack*. The pamphlet included several references to the ONA and Myatt as being part of a Satanic infiltration. *Final Conflict* regarded the ONA and similar groups as being part of a Jewish, Catholic, and homosexual conspiracy. During this period, the ideas of the ONA became more well known, and their influence increased in the Satanic milieu, even if there is no indication that they gained a large number of actual members.

In April 1999, one Stephen Copeland was arrested for a series of bomb deeds in London, killing three and injuring 140 people. He had targeted Asian, Black, and gay communities, and there was speculation that he had been inspired by the writings of Myatt that had led to the latter's arrest in 2000.[21] Copeland had been a member of the National Socialist Movement, an organization that had originally been led by Myatt. However, Myatt had left the group in 1998, and no charges against him were filed. The bombings

would, however, continue to be associated with Myatt in the media. There is little indication that the events of 1999 in any way slowed down the influence of the ONA—rather, the opposite. While Myatt had now converted to Islam, and Christos Beest left the order in 1999, new texts connected to the ONA were rapidly being spread via the internet. Such publications have become their main mean of disseminating information. It should be noted that the existence of the ONA as an order and the size of their membership are not the central issue for many of their sympathizers. Rather, the ONA's main role has been to produce and distribute ideological and ritual material for people to read and practice on their own. While there is a debate regarding which writings are to be considered ONA canon, the textual corpus now encompasses several thousands of pages.

The Black Book of Satan (1984)

Origin

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the history of the ONA is difficult to reconstruct. Based on the writings of Myatt and Long, Goodrick-Clarke claims that Myatt had met a woman in 1973 who led a small Satanic Wicca coven that would later be called the ONA.[22] Christos Beest claims that according to the order's internal legends, the ONA is as old as 7,000 years and based upon the worship of a dark goddess called Baphomet. He also refers to Albion as the name of the civilization where the ONA originated.[23] This ancient cult supposedly believed that the rise and fall of civilizations was determined by the ebb and flow of cosmic energies, ideas similar to those found in Savitri Devi's writings. In the 1960s, the modern ONA was allegedly founded by this unnamed woman who united three smaller groups that were all descendants of the older tradition. In many ways, the narrative of a mysterious woman initiating the founder of a movement and then disappearing, in Myatt's case to Australia, is similar to other origin stories found in the British occult and Wiccan milieu.[24] One could, for example, easily compare it to the foundational myth of Wicca, according to which Gerald Gardner was initiated into a coven in the New Forest by a woman referred to as Old Dorothy, or to the foundation legend of the Golden Dawn.

The ONA's first texts began to appear in the late 1970s. Their authorship is

unclear; Goodrick-Clarke attributes nearly all of the ONA's writings between the 1970s and 1990s to Myatt. However, Jeffery Kaplan claims that it is unlikely Myatt produced all the texts.[25]

The Black Book of Satan, parts of which are reprinted here, was most likely produced in the 1980s, the first publication date being 1984. The book is seemingly an early introduction to the spiritual system of the ONA and what the organization defines as the "Sinister Way."[26] *The Black Book of Satan* is thus aimed at outsiders who are interested in working with the system created by the ONA. The organization exists more as producers of ideology than a formal movement, so its texts are often designed for use in self-initiations.

Content

The Black Book of Satan consists mainly of rituals and an introduction to the ONA's version of Satanism. Reprinted here are three excerpts from the book: "The 21 Satanic points," "What is Satanism?" and one of the ONA's versions of the Black Mass.

ONA regards its membership as representatives of "traditional Satanism," which according to the organization is an initiatory path, intended to create a new kind of superman through extreme physical and mental challenges. To achieve this goal, one cannot obey the laws of society, and the ONA clearly distances itself from the "respectable" form of Satanism practiced within the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set.[27] The ONA writes about the objectives of Satanism:

> For us, Satanism is all about the creation of proud, strong, characterful, insightful individuals—individuals who have gone beyond the majority and who thus represent a higher type. Genuine Satanic groups do not seek subservient, decadent, weak-willed followers. They seek to create a real elite—almost a new race of beings. Of course, this is not easy—it is really dangerous. Quite often, new Initiates fail because of the difficulty or because they lack the essential desire to succeed. But that is how evolution works—the strong overcome challenges and evolve; the others stay where they are, descend, or are destroyed.[28]

The ONA created a complicated and often challenging system, which mixes a form of antisocial anarchist perspective[29] with fascism and magical rituals invoking Adolf Hitler as a form of Satanic messiah. This is intermingled with H. P. Lovecraft–inspired notions of dark gods and a dialectical historical process proceeding toward the establishment of a Western empire, eventually culminating in a Galactic Aeonic civilization. The system consists of seven

degrees, the first of which is called neophyte. The neophyte is given different tasks, like collecting various central texts of the ONA, and performing what is called “The Secret task.” This reappears in higher initiatory degrees as well and often consists of a test of physical endurance or a criminal act, the nature of which varies across the different degrees. A lot of focus is on physical fitness and enduring harsh conditions. One task is to learn how to use a crossbow and venture into the woods to hunt, skin, and dismember a prey. More traditional exercises involve stealing a communion wafer to use in a Black Mass. The neophyte must also try to locate and be initiated into an existing group of the ONA if one is available, and learn to play “the Star Game,” a rather complicated game based on the planetary teachings of the ONA that according to the organization is the basis for its name and relates to their ideas of Aeons.[30]

The Black Book of Satan starts with twenty-one points representing the satanic tradition (in style, if not in content, inspired by LaVey’s “Satanic Statements”), which among other things state:

> Respect not pity or weakness, for they are a disease which makes sick the strong.
> Test always your strength, for therein lies success.
> Seek happiness in victory—but never in peace.
> (. . .) The blood of the living makes good fertilizer for the seeds of the new.
> He who stands atop the highest pyramid of skulls can see the furthest.
> Discard not love but treat it as an imposter, but ever be just.
> All that is great is built upon sorrow.

According to ONA, criminal activities are beneficial to the aspiring Satanist, as they place him or her in a state outside the laws of society, creating a constant stress that separates the elite from the weak. Especially burglary and drug dealing are recommended in various texts of the ONA, but murder is also advocated.[31] The latter is related to the ONA’s ideas about human sacrifice, referred to as “culling.” The ONA distinguishes between two forms of sacrifice: one where the victim volunteers to be offered to the dark gods, and a second where the victim volunteers unknowingly through their actions, in other words by acting in a way that the ONA judges to be dishonorable. The killing can be done either through assassination or by magical symbolic means.[32] Currently there is no evidence that the ONA or people practicing their system have performed these rituals, and their meaning remains ambivalent.[33] In a discussion of sacrifice, Christos Beest states:

> This is actually the secret of the manuscripts. They are designed for people who can think and judge for themselves. That includes when a Satanic master comes along and tells you to dispatch someone—you are faced with a choice: if you do it you will please the master, but do you want a master like that? As the master, do you want somebody serving you who is weak, or do you want somebody who will turn round and refuse to obey? We're looking for the latter.[34]

The demands increase during the initiate's journey into the system of the ONA and include seclusion from society and civilization.

It is difficult to get a clear image regarding how the ONA view Satan. It is evident that they see him as a more metaphysical force than LaVey did, and they also try to separate him from his Judeo-Christian context.[35] There are moreover recurring references to "dark gods," and these seem to be connected to ideas about Aeonic and cultural changes. Satan, in this view, is one of the forces for evolution and change. Still there is within the ONA, just like in other modern Satanic movements, ideas about Satan being connected to personal change and transformation: "Satan in particular and the Dark Gods in general are a means to self-fulfillment and self-understanding."[36]

Genre and Audience

The Black Book of Satan is intended to provide a theological introduction to the ONA's understanding of Satanism, and a working manual for people interested in the system of the organization. The prospective readership thus consists of aspiring Satanists rather than complete outsiders. The book is non-fiction but contains parts that can be seen as self-created mythologies surrounding Satan and other dark gods.

Reception and Influence

While there is disagreement as to whether the ONA exist as an actual formal organization and how large it is, the impact of the ONA is not really related to their size as an order. Rather, the ONA has primarily had an impact through disseminating and popularizing its distinct ideas and concepts. The system presented in the ONA manuscripts can be used by anyone, and there is no need for a formal initiation involving other individuals. Based upon what little we know, it seems that most who engage in ONA-related work do so on a solitary basis. Today, there are also several conflicting fractions online that claim to be the real ONA. Through the relatively broad distribution of texts related to the organization, the ONA has become one of

the most significant producers of Satanic ideology in the twenty-first century. The ONA have directly inspired smaller groups that have embraced different parts of their teachings. Particularly during the early 2000s the influence of the ONA seems to have been at its peak, with several smaller new groups that appeared and drew clear inspiration from the ONA.[37] Many of these would later disperse. Whether these groups had an actual presence outside of the web is difficult to know, and many are most likely only online organizations.

The ONA has also seemingly inspired groups like the Temple of the Black Light, and authors like the American Michael W. Ford (see separate chapters in the present volume). The most debated influence that the ONA has had on modern Satanism is that its teachings have been central in popularizing National Socialist ideas within parts of the Satanic milieu. This was most evident in the late 1990s, which witnessed the emergence of a small number of Satanic groups with an explicitly far-right political agenda, such as the Brotherhood of Balder, the Order of the Sinister Way, and the White Order of Thule. The ONA was not the first Satanic organization to draw on Nazi ideologies, or to embrace such an ideology (one can for example mention the American organization the Brotherhood of the Ram, which mixed Satanism with white supremacy ideas in the 1960s), but it has been more influential than its predecessors. Many Satanists have been strongly critical of the ONA, and references to them were a contested issue in early Satanic chatrooms and message boards.[38] The continued impact of the ONA is difficult to evaluate. Online Facebook groups have only a few hundred members, a number that is surprisingly small. However, this is not necessarily a very reliable indicator of the actual present interest in the system. In recent years there has been a renewed interest from British law enforcement and media. The anti-fascist organizations Hope Not Hate had included two chapters related to the ONA in their 2019 annual report on British hate groups.[39]

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Excerpts from Order of the Nine Angles, *The Black Book of Satan* (1984)

The 21 Satanic Points

1. Respect not pity or weakness, for they are a disease which makes sick the strong.[40]
2. Test always your strength, for therein lies success.
3. Seek happiness in victory—but never in peace.
4. Enjoy a short rest, better than a long.
5. Come as a reaper, for thus you will sow.
6. Never love anything so much you cannot see it die.
7. Build not upon sand, but upon rock. And build not for today or yesterday but for all time.
8. Strive ever for more, for conquest is never done.
9. And die rather than submit.
10. Forge not works of art but swords of death, for therein lies great art.
11. Learn to raise yourself above yourself so you can triumph over all.
12. The blood of the living makes good fertiliser for the seeds of the new.
13. He who stands atop the highest pyramid of skulls can see the furthest.
14. Discard not love but treat it as an impostor, but ever be just.
15. All that is great is built upon sorrow.
16. Strive not only forwards, but upwards for greatness lies in the highest.
17. Come as a fresh strong wind that breaks yet also creates.
18. Let love of life be a goal but let your highest goal be greatness.
19. Nothing is beautiful except man: but most beautiful of all is woman.
20. Reject all illusion and lies, for they hinder the strong.
21. What does not kill, makes stronger.

What Is Satanism?

Satanism is fundamentally a way of living—a practical philosophy of life. The essence of this way is the belief that we can all, as individuals, achieve far more with our lives than we realize. Most people waste the opportunities that life can, by magick, be made to bring.

Satanic magick is simply the use of magickal forces or energies to enhance the life of an individual or individuals according to their desires. This usage can be of two types—the first is “external” and the second is “internal.”

External magick is essentially sorcery: the changing of external events, circumstances or individuals in accordance with the wishes of the sorcerer. Internal magick is the changing of the consciousness of the individual magician using certain magickal techniques—this is essentially the quest of the Initiate for the higher grades of magickal attainment, a following of the way of Adeptship.

To external magick belongs ceremonial and hermetic rituals. To internal magick belongs the seven-fold sinister way. Ceremonial rituals are rituals involving more than two individuals, the ritual taking place in either a Temple or an outdoor area consecrated as a Temple. Ceremonial rituals involve a set text which is followed by the participants, and the wearing of ceremonial robes together with the use of certain items having magickal or Occult significance. Hermetic rituals are usually undertaken by an individual working alone or with one assistant/companion. This present work deals with Satanic ceremonial magick: Satanic hermetic and internal magick is dealt with in the book *NAOS: A Practical Guide to Sinister Hermetic Magick*.

Satanism, in its beginnings, is all about making conscious (or liberating) our dark or shadow nature, and to this end, Satanic magick is undertaken. Satanists believe that we are already gods: but most people fail to understand this and continue to grovel: to others or to a "god." The Satanist is proud, strong and defiant and detests the religion of the crucified god founded by the Nazarene, Yeshua. A Nazarene (a follower of Yeshua) is afraid of dying and weighed down by guilt and envy. The religion of Yeshua has inverted all natural values, setting back the course of our conscious evolution. Satanism, on the contrary, is a natural expression of the evolutionary or "Promethean" urge within us: and its magick is a means to make us gods upon Earth, to realize the potential that lies within us all.

Satanic ceremonies are a means to enjoy the pleasures of life: they offer carnality, the pleasure of fulfilling one's desires, the bringing of material and personal rewards and the joys of darkness. But they are only a beginning, a stage toward something greater. It is one of the purposes of a Satanic Temple to guide those Initiates who may be interested along the difficult and dangerous path which is the seven-fold way. Those who do not wish to follow this path to Adeptship and beyond should simply enjoy the many pleasures which the Prince of Darkness offers to those who by a Satanic Initiation wish to follow His philosophy of living.

In traditional Satanism there is an appreciation of the role of women, for

Satanism at its highest level is concerned with the development of the individual: roles as such are a necessary part of self-development. To be played, discarded and then transcended. The structure of traditional Temples and the rituals performed by those members of those Temples reflect this appreciation and understanding. For example, it is possible and indeed desirable for a Mistress of Earth to establish and: organise her own Temple unless she herself wishes otherwise, just as it is possible and desirable to celebrate the Black Mass using a priest, naked, upon the altar while the Priestess conducts the service, such reversal being an accepted principle of Black Magick.

The Black Mass

Introduction

The Black Mass is a ceremonial ritual with a threefold purpose. First, it is a positive inversion of the mass of the Nazarene church, and in this sense is a rite of Black Magick (see the "Guide to Black Magick"). Second it is a means of personal liberation from the chains of Nazarene dogma and thus a blasphemy: a ritual to liberate unconscious feelings. Third, it is a magickal rite in itself, that is, correct performance generates magickal energy which the celebrant can direct.

The Black Mass has been greatly misunderstood. It is not simply an inversion of Nazarene symbolism and words – when a Nazarene mass is celebrated (as occurs every day, many times, throughout the world) certain energies or vibrations compatible with the Nazarene ethos may or may not be generated, depending on the circumstances and the individuals attending. That is, under certain circumstances, the Nazarene mass can be a ritual of "white magic": the energies that are sometimes produced being produced because a number of individuals of like mind are gathered together in ritualized setting; there is nothing in the production of energies which is attributable to external agencies (e.g., "god").

What a genuine Black Mass does is "tune into" those energies and then alter them in a sinister way. This occurs during the "consecration" part of the Black Mass. The Black Mass also generates its own forms of (sinister) energy.

To see the Black Mass as simply a mockery is to misunderstand its

magick. Also, the Black Mass does not require those who conduct it or participate in it to believe or accept Nazarene theology: it is simply means that the participants accept that others, who attend Nazarene masses, do believe in at least to some degree in Nazarene theology—the Black Mass uses the energy produced by those beliefs against those who believe in them, by distorting that energy, and sometimes redirecting it. This is genuine Black Magick.

Participants

Altar Priest—lies naked upon altar
Priestess—in white robesMistress of Earth—in scarlet robes
Master—in purple robes
Congregation—in black robes

Setting

Usually an indoor Temple. If outdoors, clearings in forests or woods are suitable. Caves are ideal. The reason for such Outdoor settings are [*sic*] to provide an impression of "enclosure."

Versions

The Black Mass exists in several versions. The one given below is the version most often used today. The other main version uses almost the same text, but is undertaken by a Priest using a naked Priestess on the altar.

Preparation of the Temple

Hazel incense to be burnt (if obtainable, the hazel is mingled with civit). Several chalices full of strong wine. Black candles. Several patens (of silver if possible) containing the consecrated cakes – these are baked the night before by the Priestess and blessed (i.e., dedicated to the Prince of Darkness [. . .]) by the Mistress of Earth. The cakes consist of honey, spring water, sea salt, wheat flour, eggs and animal fat. One paten is set aside for the ritual hosts. These should be obtained from a Nazarene place of worship—but if this is not possible, they are made by the Priestess if imitation of them (unleavened white hosts).

The Mass

The Priestess signifies the beginning of the Mass by clapping her hands together twice. The Mistress of Earth turns to the congregation, makes the sign of the inverted pentagram with her left hand, saying:

I will go down to the altars in Hell.

The Priestess responds by saying:

To Satan, the giver of life.

All:

Our Father which wert in heaven Hallowed be thy name
In heaven as it is on Earth.
Give us this day our ecstasy
And deliver us to evil as well as temptation for we are your kingdom for aeons and aeons.

Master:

May Satan the all-powerful Prince of Darkness
And Lord of Earth Grant us our desires.

All:

Prince of Darkness, hear us!
I believe in one Prince, Satan, who reigns over this Earth,
And in one Law which triumphs over all. I believe in one Temple
Our Temple to Satan, and in one Word which triumphs over all:
The Word of ecstasy. And I believe in the Law of the Aeon,
Which is sacrifice, and in the letting of blood
For which I shed no tears since I give praise to my Prince
The fire-giver and look forward to his reign
And the pleasures that are to come!

The Mistress kisses the Master, then turns to the congregation, saying:

May Satan be with you.

Master:

Veni, omnipotens aeternae diabolus!

Mistress:

By the word of the Prince of Darkness, I give praise to you
(She kisses the lips of the altar-Priest)
My Prince, bringer of enlightenment. I greet you
Who cause us to struggle and seek the forbidden thoughts.

(The Master repeats the “Veni” chant)
Mistress:

Blessed are the strong for they shall inherit the Earth.

(She kisses the chest of the altar-Priest)

Blessed are the proud for they shall breed gods!

(She kisses the penis of the altar-Priest)

Let the humble and the meek die in their misery!

(She kisses the Master who passes the kiss on to the Priestess who kisses each member of the congregation. After this, she hands the paten containing the “hosts” to the Mistress. The Mistress holds the paten over the altar-Priest, saying:)

Praised are you, my Prince and lover, by the strong: Through our evil we have this dirt; by our boldness and Strength, it will become for us a joy in this life.

All:

Hail Satan, Prince of life!

(The Mistress places the paten on the body of the altar-Priest, saying quietly:)

Suscipe, Satanas, munus quad tibi offerimus memoriam Recolentes vindex.

(The Priestess, quietly saying “Sanctissimi Corporis Satanas,” begins to masturbate the altar-Priest. As she does, the congregation begin to clap their hands and shout in encouragement while the Master and the Mistress chant the “Veni” chant. The Priestess allows the semen to fall upon the “hosts,” then hands the paten to the Mistress who holds it up before the congregation

saying to them:)

May the gifts of Satan be forever with you.

All:

As they are with you!

(The Mistress returns the paten to the body of the altar-Priest, takes up one of the chalices, saying:)

Praised are you, my Prince, by the defiant: through our Arrogance and pride
We have this drink: let it become for us an elixir of life.

(She sprinkles some of the wine over the altar-Priest and towards the congregation, then returns the chalice to the altar, saying to the congregation:)

With pride in my heart I give praise to those who drove the nails
And he who thrust the spear into the body of Yeshua, the impostor.
May his followers rot in their rejection and filth!

(The Master addresses the congregation saying:)

Do you renounce Yeshua, the great deceiver, and all his works?

All:

We do renounce the Nazarene Yeshua, the great deceiver
And all his works.

Master:

Do you affirm Satan?

All:

We do affirm Satan!

(The Master begins to vibrate “Agios o Satanas” while the Mistress picks up the paten with the “hosts” and turns to the congregation, saying:)

I who am the joys and pleasures of life which strong men

Have forever sought, am come to show you my body and my blood.

(She gives the paten to the Priestess, then removes the robe of the Priestess, saying:)

Remember, all you gathered here, nothing is beautiful except Man:
But most beautiful of all is Woman.

(The Priestess gives the paten back to the Mistress, then takes the chalices and consecrated cakes to the congregation who eat and drink. When all have finished, the Mistress holds up the paten, saying:)

Behold, the dirt of the earth which the humble will eat!

(The congregation laughs while the Mistress flings the "hosts" at them which they trample underfoot while the Master continues with the "Agios o Satanas" vibration. The Mistress claps her hands three times to signal to the congregation. She then says:

Dance, I command you!

(The congregation then begin a dance, counter sunwise, chanting "Satan! Satan!" while they dance. The Priestess catches them one by one, kisses the person caught and then removes their robe after which they return to the dance. The Mistress stands in the centre of the dancers, and uplifting her arms, says:)

Let the church of the impostor Yeshua crumble into dust
Let all the scum who worship the rotting fish suffer and die in their misery and rejection!
We trample on them and spit of their sin!
Let there be ecstasy and darkness; let there be chaos and laughter,
Let there be sacrifice and strife: but above all let us enjoy
The gifts of life!

(She signals to the Priestess who stops the dancer of her choice. The congregation then pair off, and the orgy of lust begins. The Mistress helps the altar-Priest down from the altar, and he joins in the festivities if he wishes.)

Should the Master and Mistress wish, the energies of the ritual are then directed by them towards a specific intention.

NOTES

During the “consecration” of the “hosts,” the Master may opt to say the following quietly (leaving the Veni chant to the Mistress):

Muem suproc mine tse cob

He then takes up the chalice, saying:

> *Murotaccep menoissimer ni rutednuffe sitlum orp iuq iedif muiretsym itnematset inretea ivon iem siniugnas xilac mine tse cih.*

It is this chalice which the Mistress then takes to sprinkle the altar-Priest. The above words are usually printed on a small card which is placed on the altar before the Mass begins: the Master using the card when the above is spoken.

As with all ceremonial rituals, it is helpful if all participants know from memory the content and spoken text. It is important that this is done and that the ritual, when undertaken, follows the text on every occasion. The ritual then is more effective as a ritual, enabling the participants to be both more relaxed and more able to enter into the spirit of the rite.

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[1] Jacob Senholt, “Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition: Political Esotericism and the Convergence of Radical Islam, Satanism, and National Socialism in the Order of Nine Angles,” in *The Devil’s Party: Satanism in Modernity*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) pp. 252f. While Senholt mentions animal sacrifice as a part of the ONA curricula, such references are hard to find. Myatt has also strongly denied all such accusations, even challenging journalists who make such claims to a duel. Jeffrey Kaplan, “Order of Nine Angles,” in *Encyclopedia of White Power*, ed. Jeffrey Kaplan (Walnut Creek: AltaMira, 2000) p. 217.

[2] See, e.g., the interview with former ONA member Christos Beest in Gavin Baddeley, *Lucifer Rising* (London: Plexus, 1999) pp. 164ff.

[3] Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun* (New York: New York University Press, 2003); Senholt, “Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition.” Goodrick-Clarke gives 1952 as the year of Myatt’s birth, in contrast to Senholt.

[4] Senholt, “Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition,” pp. 267f.

[5] For the discussion on Myatt and his relationship to ONA, see Senholt (2013) and Goodrick-Clarke (2003). For an alternative view, rejecting the identification of Long and Myatt, see Jeffrey Kaplan, “Order of Nine Angles.”

[6] Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*.

[7] Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*; Kaplan, “Order of Nine Angles,” pp. 216f.

[8] The term Esoteric Hitlerism was first used by the National Socialist writer Miguel Serrano (1917–2009) but based upon the previous work by Savitri Devi (1905–1982), who saw in Hitler an avatar of

the Divine and thus regarded him as a figure with a cosmic mission. Her most important work regarding these matters is *The Lighting and the Sun* (1958), and her ideas have played a significant role in post-war National Socialism. See Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Hitler's Priestess: Savitri Devi, the Hindu-Aryan Myth and Neo-Nazism* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

[9] Senholt, "Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition," p. 261.

[10] David Myatt, "The Approach of the Dark Gods," in *The Infernal Texts*, ed. Stephen Sennit (Tempe: Original Falcon Press, 2004) pp. 27ff.

[11] See for example Kevin Coogan, *Dreamer of the Day: Francis Parker Yockey and the Postwar Fascist International* (Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia, 1998) on the life of Francis Parker Yockey and his involvement in the post-war fascist international.

[12] Anton Long, "Satanism, Blasphemy and the Black Mass," in Sennit, *The Infernal Texts*, p. 18.

[13] Baddeley, *Lucifer Rising*, p. 165.

[14] Senholt, "Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition," p. 252.

[15] Baddeley, *Lucifer Rising*, p. 164.

[16] Graham Harvey, "Performing Alterity and Othering," in *The Encyclopedic Sourcebook of Satanism*, ed. James R. Lewis and Jesper Aagaard Petersen (New York: Promethus Books, 2008) pp. 610, 623ff.

[17] Harvey, "Performing Alterity and Othering."

[18] Elizabeth Selwyn, "The Right Wing Left Hand Path," in *The Black Flame. Winter* XXIV A.S. (New York: Hells Kitchen Procuctions, 1990).

[19] https://web.archive.org/web/20200905015017/https://wyrdsister.wordpress.com/2017/07/25/a-letter-from-the-o9a-to-michael-aquino/.

[20] Kaplan, "Order of Nine Angles," p. 217.

[21] Senholt, "Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition," p. 264.

[22] Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*.

[23] Baddeley, *Lucifer Rising*, 164. Albion is Greek, and the oldest known name for Great Britain. It is possible to see a sort of nationalist aspect to the focus on the civilization of Albion since it makes the British Isles the center of the cult.

[24] Senholt, "Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition," pp. 255f.

[25] See Kaplan, "Order of Nine Angles," and Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*.

[26] For a discussion on the ideological components of the sinister tradition, see Senholt "Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition," pp. 252f.

[27] https://web.archive.org/web/20200905015017/https://wyrdsister.wordpress.com/2017/07/25/a-letter-from-the-o9a-to-michael-aquino/.

[28] http://www.satanservice.org/theory/onastnsm.txt.

[29] Not to be confused with anarchism in its libertarian or socialist forms.

[30] Senholt, "Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition," p. 262.

[31] Kaplan, "Order of Nine Angles," p. 237.

[32] Kaplan, "Order of Nine Angles," p. 237.

[33] See the interview with Beest in Baddeley, *Lucifer Rising*, pp. 164ff.

[34] Baddeley, *Lucifer Rising*, p. 166.

[35] Generally, Semitic references are viewed in a negative light. See Senholt, "Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition," p. 253.

[36] Conrad Robury, Anton Long, and Christos Beest, *Codex Saerus: Black Book of Satan I, II, III*, ed.

Michael W. Ford (Succubus Productions, 2007) p. 99.

[37] See Mattias Gardell, *Gods of the Blood: The Pagan Revival and White Separatism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

[38] Jesper Aasgaard Petersen, "Binary Satanism: The Construction of Community in a Digital World," in *The Encylopedic Sourcebook of Satanism*, ed. James R. Lewis and Jesper Aagard Petersen (New York: Prometheus Books, 2008).

[39] Various authors, *State of Hate: People vs the Elite?* (London: Hope Not Hate Ltd., 2019).

[40] Robury, Long, and Beest, *Codex Saerus*, pp. 3–5, 10–16.

16

Øystein "Euronymous" Aarseth (Den Sorte Sirkel/Black Metal Satanism), Interview for *Close-Up Magazine* (1992)

Per Faxneld

The text excerpt in this chapter is taken from an interview with Øystein "Euronymous" Aarseth (1968–1993), arguably the most important ideologue in the development of the Black Metal variety of Satanism.[1] The primary means of dissemination for said Satanic ideology has been interviews with musicians in fanzines and magazines, and, to a more limited extent, song lyrics and liner notes for albums.

The Scandinavian Black Metal scene where Aarseth was a prime mover coalesced in the shift between the 1980s and the 1990s. It had been preceded by a great number of metal bands across the world employing Satanic symbolism, including England's Venom (formed in 1978) and Sweden's Bathory (formed in 1983). However, these older bands almost never held any real Satanic convictions (the LaVeyan Satanism practiced by the Danish metal singer King Diamond being one exception).[2] The Scandinavians decided they wanted to turn everything that bands like Venom and Bathory had only sung about into actual reality: they would dedicate themselves to worshipping Satan as the god of evil. Darkness, suffering, and violence became watchwords. An integral element of this diabolical asceticism was ritualized self-injury, which was practiced on stage as well as in private, and promoted in interviews.[3] Central figures in the milieu moreover perpetrated murders and a number of church burnings, demonstrating that the anti-social rhetoric was more than just words.

Satan was here interpreted as an actual conscious entity. Being interviewed by UK metal magazine *Kerrang!* in early 1993, Aarseth explained: "We are

but slaves of The One With Horns. We are religious people, and total obedience is a fundamental concept for us. I'm a piece of dust in the whole cosmos, compared to Him."[4] This stood in stark contrast to the (more or less) atheist LaVeyan Satanism (see separate chapter in the present volume), which at the time dominated the occult milieu, where Satan was seen as a symbol of individualism. According to LaVey, a Satanist should focus on sensual pleasure of all types, and he held Christianity with all its prohibitions and hypocritical moral to be the real evil. In *The Satanic Bible* (1969), LaVey even described Satanism as "sensible and humanistic."[5] Black Metal musicians instead preferred the exact opposite: extreme and anti-humanistic ideas. In one sense, then, Black Metal Satanism could be seen as positioning itself as much against LaVey as against Christianity—something that was demonstrated by the record label run by Aarseth having an "anti-LaVey" logo on the back of several releases.[6] It could also be said that Black Metal Satanism basically enacts the long-standing Christian nightmare of a nefarious Satanist cult of evil (which was never a historical reality), later kept alive in horror fiction, tabloid journalism, and modern rumor panics.[7]

The term "Black Metal" originated with the 1982 album of this title by English band Venom, whose Satanism was, as mentioned above, merely kitschy entertainment. According to Aarseth and other key ideologists in the scene, Black Metal should not be perceived as a particular musical "sound," but rather signifies any type of metal music with Satanic lyrics.[8] The album sleeves and lyrics were filled with Satanic motifs, and musicians made it fully clear in interviews where their religious allegiance lay. The years before Black Metal became a prominent genre in its own right, Death Metal reigned as the most extreme form of metal. As can be seen in the source text in the present chapter, Euronymous tended to use the two terms as overlapping, since his type of Satanism was so focused on the worship of death. It is noteworthy that, for example, Morbid Angel (formed in 1983) from the United States, one of the most popular Death Metal bands, had Satanic lyrics —and some would hence later label them Black Metal.

In the case of Death Metal more generally speaking, Satanism was simply one of many registers of provocation available, and the emphasis tended to be on bodily dismemberment (of others, rather than oneself) and gore, in the vein of so-called splatter films.[9] Still, Morbid Angel was not alone in embracing the demonic. Another US Death Metal band that became popular

by drawing on this theme was Deicide (formed in 1989), whose singer Glen Benton (1967–) was briefly probably the most fanatical and vocal Satanist in music, before being surpassed by the Nordic radicals. His brand of Satanism was in fact quite close to theirs. In a 1992 interview he explained: "I don't consider myself self-owning. I belong to something, and what I belong to is Satan."[10] At first, Nordic Black Metal Satanists were suspicious regarding how genuine his beliefs were, but at least one of them, Bård "Faust" Eithun (1974–) of Norwegian band Emperor, testified to being favorably surprised when actually meeting with Benton: "[I]n late '92 I had the opportunity to talk with Glen Benton and he was one of the most evil persons I have ever met. . . . His mission is to make little children commit suicide and his music comes in second place."[11] The perhaps most significant element in this quote by Eithun is his emphasis on music being of secondary importance, with an evil Satanic ideology being the primary concern. This was a common view in the Nordic Black Metal scene.

Aside from the Norwegian Euronymous, the Swedes Tony "It" Särkkä (1972–2017) and Per "Dead" Ohlin (1969–1991) must also be mentioned as innovators of Black Metal ideology. All of them would die at a fairly young age: Ohlin took his own life in 1991, Aarseth was murdered by rivaling Black Metal musician Varg Vikernes (1973–) in 1993, and Särkkä committed suicide in 2017. Aarseth and Ohlin were both in the band Mayhem (formed in 1984), while Särkkä was in bands like Abruptum and Ophthalamia (both formed in 1989). Other key bands in the scene were Norway's Darkthrone (formed in 1986), Burzum (formed in 1991), Emperor (formed in 1991), Sweden's Marduk (formed in 1990), and Dissection (formed in 1989). Many of these bands transitioned from Death Metal to Black Metal around 1991.

At this time, Black Metal became a media sensation due to controversial statements from musicians and a series of church arsons linked to them. Black Metal soon grew to be an international trend, but often without the full extreme ideological content. In Norway, the inner core of the scene had organized itself into a loose group called *Den Sorte Sirkel* ("The Black Circle"), and in Sweden the equivalent was called the True Satanist Horde. The Swedish group was active for a longer time, and more tightly structured (partly with inspiration from outlaw biker gangs).[12]

After Euronymous' death in 1993, the Norwegian scene remained internationally prominent, but the emphasis on Satanism would henceforth gradually become comparatively stronger in its Swedish equivalent. Särkkä

continued upholding the position that religion should be privileged above music.[13] He was also known for claims that his music was directly channeled from the demonic sphere, stating that during recordings "the dark powers . . . possessed our bodies."[14]

The second half of the 1990s saw the rise of so-called orthodox Black Metal in Sweden (as well as in France and other countries), which can be described as a sort of "back to Euronymous" movement, where emphasis was anew put on worshipping evil with a total dedication some felt had begun to wane in many quarters. Especially important for the "orthodox" development were Swedish bands like Funeral Mist (formed in 1993), Malign (formed in 1994), and Ofermod (formed in 1996). They were later joined by the younger musicians in Watain (formed in 1998), who would go on to become the most well known of these groups. In France, Antaeus (formed in 1994) and Deathspell Omega (formed in 1998) can be considered part of this development, as can Germany's Katharsis (formed in 1994). From 2003 onward, all of them released records on the French label Norma Evangelium Diaboli, which served as a focal point for their radical form of Satanism.[15]

Finnish religious studies scholar Kennet Granholm suggests that what he calls the "Ritual Black Metal scene" is most prominent in Sweden, even if it is transnational in character.[16] His claim is easy to concur with, considering that Sweden has, as described above, since at least the mid-1990s been the primary arena of the "ritualizing" and "religionizing" of Black Metal. It should be noted that even the more "mainstream" (relatively speaking) and less "orthodox" band Dark Funeral (formed in 1993) maintained—for example, in a much-discussed 1996 episode of a Swedish talk show—that their concerts were Satanic "rituals."[17] This rhetoric is thus quite old in the Swedish scene, being present even before the "orthodox" current grew in strength. Using music as religious propaganda is naturally nothing new. A great portion of classical music could be classified thus. Popular music, too, is full of examples, from Johnny Cash's pious Christian country ballads to the so-called Krishnacore subgenre of punk rock in the early 1990s, which promoted ISKCON ideology.[18] In terms of making *Satanism* the primary purpose of a music genre, the Nordic Black Metal scene was, however, something new.

Aside from Satanism, the most disturbing part of Black Metal for most was probably its direct connection to violence, murder (with three homicides

committed by famous musicians in the Norwegian and Swedish scenes), and what can only be described as crimes of religious terrorism, such as, church burnings. Only in Norway, at least twenty-five churches were set on fire between 1992 and 1995 by individuals from the Black Metal milieu.[19] Real-life transgression of an often criminal kind, then, is a central component of this brand of Satanism, and essential to building what has been called transgressive subcultural capital.[20]

Black Metal Satanism, as we have seen, takes pride in being destructive for the individual, including the Satanists themselves. For example, the inside of the cover of the highly influential band Ofermod's 1998 EP *Mystérion Tés Anomias* contained the following exhortation: "Destroy your natural instincts and submit to evil! A life through self-destruction is flesh for the Master."[21] Dark Funeral's David Parland (1970–2013) explained his view of Satanism as follows: "To me it means sacrificing oneself to darkness and evil. Evil, in turn, means to affirm the beast within, and it primarily opposes humanism. Satanism is destructive and associated with pain."[22]

Norwegian historian of religions Gry Mørk suggests that the celebration of evil is really a striving to "(re)gain an enhanced sensation and awareness of self and life," and one has to "go through pain, evil, darkness" in order to achieve this.[23] This seems a bit optimistic. Rather, it is more reasonable to take the emic claims about Black Metal being negative and self-destructive seriously, and not assume it is just a coded way to talk about something that will at the end of the day have beneficial effects. Such assumptions are, more than anything, expressions of wishful thinking on the part of scholars and is not borne out by actual fieldwork in the milieu.[24]

Interview with Øystein "Euronymous" Aarseth, *Close-Up Magazine* (1992)

Origin

The interview constituting this chapter's source text was conducted by journalist Robert Becirovic (b. 1971), for issue number 4 (June 1992) of the influential metal and punk magazine *Close-Up*, published in Sweden 1991–2019. Becirovic interviewed Aarseth, who lived in the Norwegian capital, Oslo, on the phone. At this time, the Norwegian Black Metal scene had just

started to gain international notoriety, making journalists as well as music fans curious about its main figures.

Content

In the interview, Aarseth does not mention Satan specifically, likely because the interviewer does not ask direct questions about this theme (see above for a quote from a different interview where he discusses his view of Satan). His overall Satanic ideology, with its strong focus on the worship of evil and death, is clearly stated here, however.

An idiosyncratic part of this is Aarseth's embrace of Communism, since its extreme forms as practiced in, for example, Kampuchea (Cambodia) is something that makes life miserable for people (though he regretfully admits that "true" Communism in fact offers complete freedom for everyone). In terms of extreme politics, Black Metal musicians have generally tended to be more inclined to flirt with the transgressive potential of far-right ideologies and symbols. The general attitude, however, has been that Black Metal and Satanism should not be aligned with any specific political opinion, instead representing a more cosmic, metaphysical type of transgression.[25] In the interview, there is an element of self-contradiction in Aarseth's expressed enthusiasm for Communism and his harsh condemnation of "socially conscious" Death Metal bands, whom he perceives as having lost the focus on worshipping death that is intrinsic to the genre according to his interpretation of it. On the other hand, the relevance of Communism for him is not its politics, but the "evil," oppressive outcome of such regimes.

Defining the boundaries of the Black and Death Metal genres is an important part of Aarseth's errand in the interview. In his opinion, such music needs to have an ideological focus on celebrating evil and death. The death threats he issues to the Swedish band Therion (formed in 1987) in this context are an example of the heated rhetoric typical in the Black Metal scene, which at times escalated to actual deeds of violence and even murder. This is also signaled in the journalist's introduction to the interview, where he gives the following background: "Not only did the band's singer Dead blow his own head off, the guitarist Euronymous has just served a four-month prison sentence for cutting a guy so badly that he needed thirty-nine stitches."[26]

In the case of Therion, the most serious thing to come of the matter was

that a young Swedish woman on the fringes of the Aarseth circle attached a threatening letter to a door of Therion singer Christofer Johnssons' (b. 1972) house with a knife and set the door on fire.[27] Therion had become a symbol of the profanation of Death Metal for Aarseth due to one of their songs ("Asphyxiate With Fear," from the 1991 album *Of Darkness . . .*) having lyrics condemning Coca-Cola for contributing to deforestation in the Amazon jungle. In a different interview, Aarseth says about the things Therion stands for that "our religion states we have to destroy this."[28]

The word evil appears twenty times in the *Close-Up* interview, making it clear this is the central point of Aarseth's worldview. Evil was at the time also presented by other members of Aarseth's circles as the primary purpose of their activities.[29] Another key topic is exclusivity: Black Metal is only for those who are truly evil and extreme, and Aarseth even states that if it was possible he would not allow those who are unfit as members of this sinister elite to buy the records.

Genre and Audience

Being a journalistic interview, the purpose of the text's author would have been to produce an entertaining and informative text for the readers of his underground metal magazine. As for the purpose of the interviewee, Øystein "Euronymous" Aarseth, it can, judging by biographical facts and his statements themselves, be assumed he had multiple objectives. Firstly, he desired to build the reputation of his band, Mayhem, and increase their record sales (even if he is adamant in the interview that he only wants the right people to buy the records, he freely admits the need for income from record sales). Secondly, he wanted to spread his ideology of venerating evil for evil's own sake, and to instill fear of it in outsiders. Thirdly, he wished to police the boundaries of the Black (and Death) Metal genre, and to underline that it was by necessity tied to a radical worship of evil and death.

The journalistic interview genre is of course a special one, and in the printed text the journalist will typically have edited out large portions of what the interviewee said, keeping what seemed most interesting for the intended readership. Often an interview will contain long sections that summarize what the interviewee has said, rather than giving it as direct quotes, but not in this case. Instead, the text consists of questions and answers reproduced, it would appear, more or less verbatim (but surely with some omissions). This

was probably partly caused by *Close-Up Magazine* having only recently made the shift from fanzine to proper magazine, and its contributors being enthusiasts without formal training in journalism who thus used this more simplistic form.

Reception and Influence

Originally printed in issue number 4 (June 1992) of *Close-Up Magazine* (published in Sweden 1991–2019), the interview was later re-published in the book *Close-Up Magazine i urval* ("Selections from *Close-Up Magazine*," 2008) and has also appeared in translation to English and other languages on a plethora of websites. In Sweden, the interview was the single most important factor in the explosion of Black Metal bands that was to follow. As Robert Becirovic, the journalist who conducted the interview, himself has ascertained: "That interview with Mayhem just changed everything."[30] Euronymous gave interviews with a similar content to English-language metal fanzines and the mainstream metal magazine *Kerrang*, which were significant in the same manner for the international context.[31] Even though he died in 1993, Euronymous remains the most important figure in the history of Black Metal Satanism—the founding father, ideologue, and trendsetter whose extreme religious views have repeatedly been echoed in the scene.

At the time of writing, there are several veteran bands that remain active and still propagate ideas similar to those of Euronymous. New bands adhering to this ideology are also being formed every year. While many of the individuals involved in the 1990s are now in their late forties, a considerable number of them have not abandoned the ideas that some scholars initially wanted to describe as a form of "youth culture."[32] Black Metal music today reaches a much larger audience than it did in the early 1990s. It should be noted, however, that even though albums by bands like Watain have topped the charts in certain countries, most of the people who listen to Black Metal do so for aesthetic enjoyment rather than as part of a Satanic practice. Many bands today also have a considerably milder take on Satanism than the hardline misanthropic, theistic version propagated by Euronymous or acts like Malign and Ofermod. Even so, it can be assumed that at least certain elements of the more radical type of Black Metal Satanism do exert an influence on a sizeable portion of the genre's fans.[33]

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Excerpt from Interview with Øystein "Euronymous" Aarseth, *Close-Up Magazine* (1992)

You don't like trendy Death Metal, so isn't it against your principles to appear in a rag like *Close-Up*?[34] Well, we don't really count *Close-Up* as a trend fanzine. Of course, it would be fucking irritating if we were placed next to THERION or some other idiot band, but our economy doesn't allow for us to totally isolate ourselves from the rest of the world, even if that would have been awesome. (. . .) Death to all trendy "Death" Metal bands with jogging pants and socially conscious lyrics, such things have nothing to do with Death Metal, damnit. We call bands like THERION and AFFLICTED (and about 340 other Swedish bands) Life Metal since they don't worship death but life. What the hell are hardcore punk lyrics doing in what was originally evil music? (. . .) When it comes to THERION, who are the worst of all Swedish bands, we have a special message for them. If they dare come to Norway to play their Life Metal we will kill them. Norway's whole Black Metal population will be there with knives. Knives that cut deeply.

When can we expect a new album from MAYHEM? We will be recording "De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas" at about the same time that this rag is published. It's going to be evil! Normal idiots should stay the fuck away from this album. Don't buy it! It's not for you, but for the evil ones. (. . .)

More than a year ago, your singer Pelle Dead took his own life. Since it was you who found the body, perhaps you know why he shot himself? When it comes to Dead he was a very evil man (goat). He hated all living things. All that kept him from blowing his head off earlier was the Black Metal/Death Metal lifestyle, with evil bands that worshipped death and wore black clothes, spikes, leather, bullet belts and the other things that are part of the true lifestyle. That was how the old bands lived, like BATHORY, SODOM, DESTRUCTION, MAYHEM and HELLHAMMER, while bands like THERION were still sucking their mother's tits. Dead lived only for this and when all the old evil bands died and the Life Metal bands in jogging pants and basket shoes took over he no longer had anything to live for. The scene was ruined. A different reason was that he felt that he did not belong in this world. He felt that it was cold, and his blood constantly froze. We

support his course of action, and we deeply respect his never-ending evilness.

Was his death expected, I mean had he talked about suicide? Yes, it was expected. We had talked quite a bit about that we would one day find Dead hanging from the ceiling, but luckily he was more evil and had even cut himself fucking severely before he shot himself.

There has been talk of you having taken photos of his corpse to use as an album cover, and that you have sent pieces of his skull to the most dedicated MAYHEM fanatics. Isn't that a bit too sick? We aren't a humanitarian joke band, damnit! When we say that we are into Death Metal it means we worship death. There's nothing too raw, disgusting, or sick. People who don't understand that can go to hell.

You're about to re-release "Deathcrush," why? According to interviews you only want the true fans of Black/Death Metal to buy your records and they probably already own "Deathcrush"? The problem is simply that not only the most evil ones got hold of "Deathcrush" but also a lot of trend idiots. There's lots of raw guys today who don't have that record and that is fucking irritating. Moreover, we did a limited edition—in '87 we didn't expect to sell more than a thousand records. We also need money to survive, I don't see any reason why we shouldn't reissue "Deathcrush." (. . .) But it is correct that we actually only want raw people to get hold of MAYHEM records. If we had the economy for it, we would ask people to send pictures of themselves and fill out a questionnaire in order to be approved to buy MAYHEM records.

Why this predilection for the extreme in music and politics (Stalinism)? People say that we are sick, we don't give a fuck. This is what we live (die) for . . . Stalinism. We hate all these "peace, love and democracy" ideas. War, sodomy and dictatorship! We support all extreme and oppressive states like old Albania, Iran, Kampuchea under the Khmer Rouge, and so on. People who die and suffer!

Do you still believe in Communism after its fall in almost the entire world? We have studied enough political theory/economics (Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Hoxha) to know that the world will sooner or later become Communist. It's the ideas of market economy and capitalism that will make it happen sooner or later. Perhaps in thirty years, perhaps in 300 years. The problem is that true Communism is damn good for people, it's total freedom. Because of that, we don't wish for it to happen. The world can go to hell. We want the old Stalinist dictatorships back, where things were

grey, gloomy, and evil. The Berlin wall should be re-erected!

Are you politically active yourself? We were members of a party that was fucking extreme, it supported old Albania and its former leader who was even in Kampuchea under the Khmer Rouge and had dinner with Pol Pot. Incredibly great! But the party has become too humanitarian, so we are going to leave it.

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[1] The best book on the Swedish Black Metal milieu is the journalistic account *Blod eld död: En svensk metalhistoria* by Ika Johannesson and Jon Jefferson Klingberg (Stockholm: Alfabeta, 2011). A somewhat more problematic journalistic work on the Norwegian milieu is Michael Moynihan and Didrik Søderlind's *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground* (Los Angeles: Feral House, 1998/2003). It partially relies too heavily on the account of events provided by Varg Vikernes, and also introduces a peculiar Jungian explanatory model. There is, however, no other work providing better insights through interviews with key figures. A fine theoretical approach to Black Metal is provided by musicologist Keith Kahn-Harris in his 2007 *Extreme Metal: Music and Culture on the Edge* (Oxford: Berg).

[2] Gavin Baddeley, *Lucifer Rising* (London: Plexus, 1999) pp. 124–125, 129, 169; Moynihan and Søderlind, *Lords of Chaos*, pp. 13–14; Ian Christe, *Sound of the Beast: The Complete Headbanging History of Heavy Metal* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003/2004) p. 244; author's interview with Tomas "Quorthon" Forsberg (Bathory), May 5, 1995.

[3] Per Faxneld, "Bleed for the Devil: Ritualized Self-Harm as Transgressive Practice in Contemporary Satanism, and the Re-enchantement of Late Modernity," *Alternative Spirituality and Religion Review* 6:2 (2015) pp. 165–196.

[4] Jason Arnopp, "We Are But Slaves of the One With Horns . . . ," *Kerrang*, no. 436 (1993) p. 46. See also, e.g., the 1993 interview in *Kill Yourself! Magazine*, no. 2: "I believe in a horned devil, a personified Satan. In my opinion all the other forms of Satanism are bullshit. I hate that some people think up idiotic ways of making eternal peace in the world and dare to call it Satanism, like so many do. Satanism comes from religious Christianity, and there it shall stay. I'm a religious person and I will fight those who misuse His name. People are not supposed to believe in themselves and be individualists. They are supposed to OBEY, to be the SLAVES of religion" (available online at https://www.fmp666.com/moonlight/mayhem.html). In older interviews, e.g., one from ca. 1989 with a fanzine (available online at http://pelleohlinmorbidmayhem.blogspot.com/p/interviews.html), Euronymous stated he is not a Satanist, and he expressed opinions very different from those of his later evil-worshipping phase.

[5] Anton Szandor LaVey, *The Satanic Bible* (New York: Avon Books, 1969) p. 74.

[6] Cf. *Slayer Mag*, vol. 10 (1995), p. 4.

[7] Asbjørn Dyrendal, "Satanismen och den moderna ondskan," in *Berättelser om ondskan: En historia genom tusen år*, ed. Olav Hammer and Catharina Raudvere (Wahlström & Widstrand, 2000) pp. 139–141; Per Faxneld, "*Kom, ondska, bliv mitt goda*: Black Metal-nyreligiositet och motdiskursens ordning," *Din: Tidsskrift for religion og kultur* 17:1 (2015) pp. 79–80.

[8] *Slayer Mag*, vol. 10 (1995) p. 4; Mattias Petterson and Robban Becirovic, "Mayhem: Den sista intervjun med Euronymous," *Close-Up*, no. 38 (2000) p. 77. Finnish scholar of religion Kennet Granholm suggests that Black Metal has always been more pagan than Satanic ("*Sons of Northern Darkness*: Heathen Influences in Black Metal and Neofolk Music," *Numen: International Review for*

the History of Religions 58:4, pp. 528–530, 534, 536–539; reiterated in "Ritual Black Metal: Popular Music as Occult Meditation and Practice," *Correspondences* 1:1 [2013] pp. 15–17), a claim based on scant and non-representative empirical material, unconvincing readings, and tendentious secondary sources. Moreover, it ignores explicit statements to the contrary by the leading figures of the genre. Nor had Granholm, at the time he wrote the article where this interpretation was first presented, conducted interviews in the milieu.

[9] On Death Metal, see Natalie J. Purcell, *Death Metal Music: The Passion and Politics of a Subculture* (Jefferson, NC: MacFarland & Company, 2003); Daniel Ekeroth, *Swedish Death Metal* (New York: Bazillion Points, 2008).

[10] Baddeley, *Lucifer Rising*, p. 173.

[11] *Slayer Mag*, no. 10 (1995), p. 5.

[12] Moynihan and Søderlind, *Lords of Chaos*, p. 68; Johannesson and Klingberg, *Blod eld död*, pp. 148–149.

[13] E.g., with statements about Satan in interviews like the following: "we are all slaves (more or less) to him, if we want it or not." *Slayer Mag*, no. 10 (1995), p. 53.

[14] *Slayer Mag*, no. 9 (1991), p. 44.

[15] Faxneld, "Bleed for the Devil," p. 112.

[16] Granholm, "Ritual Black Metal," p. 18. Oddly, Granholm's article completely misses out on the importance of French label Norma Evangelium Diaboli for the broad emergence of this theme in the final years of the 1990s. Said label was without doubt the most prominent institutional support ideas of this sort had, and it provided a transnational rallying point and hub for pan-European exchange and cooperation.

[17] *Taxi*, SVT, TV1, April 4, 1996.

[18] On the latter, see Mike Dines, "The Sacralization of Straightedge Punk: Nada Brahma and the Divine Embodiment of Krishnacore," *Musicological Annual* (Ljubljana: Department of Musicology, University of Ljubljana, 2014) pp. 147–156.

[19] Moynihan and Søderlind, *Lords of Chaos*, p. 106.

[20] Kahn-Harris, *Extreme Metal*.

[21] Ofermod *Mystérion Tés Anomias*, 7" EP (Pounding Metal Productions, 1998).

[22] *Close-Up*, no. 15, (1995) p. 22: "För mig innebär det att offra sig åt mörker och ondska. Ondska innebär i sin tur att bejaka det bestialiska inom sig och det står framför allt mot hu- manism. Satanism är destruktivt och har med smärta att göra."

[23] Gry Mørk, "With My Art I Am the Fist in the Face of God: On Old-School Black Metal," in *Contemporary Religious Satanism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Jesper Aa. Petersen (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009) p. 194.

[24] Cf. Faxneld, "Bleed for the Devil"; Faxneld, "*Kom, ondska, bliv mitt goda*."

[25] Cf. Faxneld, "*Kom, ondska, bliv mitt goda*," pp. 72–73.

[26] *Close-Up Magazine*, no. 4 (June 1992) p. 11.

[27] Johannesson and Klingberg, *Blod eld död*.

[28] Arnopp, Arnopp, "We Are But Slaves of the One With Horns . . . ," p. 45.

[29] A member of Norwegian band Emperor stated the following in an interview with *Mortician Magazine*, no. 2 (1992), p. 15: "A dark and evil mentality is needed. (. . .) Our circle's 'mission' is too [*sic*] cultivate darkness and evil and to destroy everything that is good in live [*sic*] (basically)"

[30] Ekeroth, *Swedish Death Metal*, p. 249.

[31] Arnopp, "We Are But Slaves of the One With Horns . . . "

[32] Thomas Bossius,”Med framtiden i backspegeln: Black metal-och transkulturen: Ungdomar, musik och religion i en senmodern värld” (PhD diss., Gothenburg, 2003) p. 137. For a critique, see Faxneld, “Bleed for the Devil,” p. 127.

[33] The actual hard core of theistic Black Metal Satanists in the Nordic countries today can be estimated to around three hundred individuals, and perhaps a couple of thousand at most worldwide. Cf. Faxneld, “Kom, ondska,” pp. 70–71.

[34] *Close-Up Magazine*, no. 4 (June 1992).

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The Satanic Reds, "FAQ for Satanic Reds—Social Realist Organization" (circa 2001)

Johan Nilsson

The organization known as the Satanic Reds was founded in the latter half of the 1990s by two individuals known as Tani Jantsang and Philip Marsh, both of whom had a history of involvement with esoteric and Satanic groups.[1] The organization has been described as a "virtual audience cult,"[2] and even though it is clear that several people have contributed in shaping it, the organization has been especially influenced by its two founders. Jantsang and Marsh have spoken for the Satanic Reds in a large number of texts, making it known, among other things, for its strong internet presence.

Something that can be called a Satanic milieu has existed in the United States since the 1960s. During the 1990s the dominant actors of the early environment (like the Church of Satan) were still around, but at the same time new organizations were developing and older groups were becoming more visible as a consequence of the growing availability of the internet. In spite of the internal polemics within the milieu, it is evident that the Satanic Reds share points of commonality with other Satanic organizations beyond the mutual interest in diabolic figures. Even though the interest in socialist politics that is characteristic of the Satanic Reds makes the movement emphasize collective identities that would be foreign to an organization like the Church of Satan,[3] the Satanic Reds share a radical interest in the self-actualizing of the individual with other movements within the milieu. Something similar could perhaps be said of the antinomianism often understood to be a characteristic of modern Satanism; although, it could be argued that this element is less significant in the writings of the Satanic Reds.[4]

The modern Satanic movement is not the only possible broader context in which the ideas and activities of the Satanic Reds can be understood. The organization can just as easily be regarded as an example of another loosely knit religious network that arose during the last decade or two of the twentieth century, namely the Left-hand Path milieu.

This milieu is often described as a network of individuals and organizations related to, and partially overlapping, late twentieth-century Satanism.[5] Kennet Granholm describes the Left-hand Path as a "milieu of 'dark spirituality' that includes many forms of modern Satanism: and is informed by some combination of three specific discourses: the ideology of individualism, the goal of self-deification, and antinomianism.[6] As argued above, the Satanic Reds involves itself in the discourses of individualism[7] and antinomianism, as do most (or all) other organizations within the Satanic milieu.[8] Even though Granholm makes it clear that the presence of these discourses alone does not make an organization a part of the Left-hand Path, the Satanic Reds are undoubtedly also connected to the movement by historical and cultural ties as well as by self-identification.[9] Beyond the characteristics identified by Granholm, it is possible to identify other discursive or ideological points of commonality. One such is the eclectic attitude of the Satanic Reds, a disposition that it shares with other contemporary Left-hand Path organizations, like Dragon Rouge (see the chapter in the present volume), as well as with earlier occultist varieties of "discourse on the satanic."[10] The eclectic attitude was not foreign to those individuals who interested themselves in the figure of the Devil from the perspective of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century occultism (like Blavatsky, Hansen, or Crowley—all of whom have separate chapters dedicated to them in the present volume) but the Left-hand Path of the late twentieth century seems to have accentuated this view of the Devil as an essentially trans-cultural symbol.[11] Another point of commonality would be the importance placed on an immanent divine force, connected, at the same time, to biological life and to a perceived spiritual dimension of existence—a force conceptualized as the Dark Flame in the writings of the Satanic Reds.[12] Somewhat less typical of the Left-hand Path milieu[13] is the strong political component of the organization.

“FAQ for Satanic Reds—Social Realist Organization” (circa 2001)

Origin

For the loosely knit Satanic milieu that had developed in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s, the 1990s can be characterized as a time of popularization and differentiation. Although these tendencies should probably not be reduced to the impact of the internet alone, there can be little doubt that the increasing availability of information technology in the last decade of the twentieth century exerted a major influence on religious movements like Satanism. As Petersen has stated, the same technology that was “valuable in terms of information exchange and retrieval, as well as general communication and contact,” could at the same time be “detrimental to authority and closer community building.”[14] Indeed, the late 1990s saw the proliferation of voices articulating satanic discourse outside the older organizations that constituted fixed points within the milieu.[15] The Satanic Reds and their emphasis on internet presence is symptomatic of this trend.

Even though this development could be described as an escalating “fragmentation” of Satanic discourse, it could also be argued that the religious environment of turn-of-the-millennium Satanism was still characterized by a not insignificant number of shared assumptions about what Satanism really was, and to a certain extent a common feeling of a Satanic milieu, even when aspects of this milieu were viewed critically. The Satanists of the late 1990s and early 2000s were, among other things, largely united in their view of the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set as important significant others.[16] These movements were often criticized or even maligned, but they were rarely ignored or unknown to the members of organizations such as the Satanic Reds. It is clear that the organization to some extent rhetorically positions its discourse on Satanism against perceived ideological competitors.[17]

Content

The text reprinted here, “FAQ for Satanic Reds—Social Realist Organization” (hereafter referred to as the FAQ), deals briefly and more or less concisely with a number of subjects, among these the organization’s

views on the Devil, its political ideology, and its relationship to other esoteric and Satanist groups.

The FAQ, as well as other writings connected to the Satanic Reds, presents its teachings as founded on a cosmology centered on an interpretation of the Hindu concepts “sat” and “tan” that are said to signify, among other things, being and its emanation.[18] Closely connected to these two basic notions is the concept of the Dark Flame—a force immanent to humanity that is sometimes associated with the kundalini of Indian yoga. The flame is described as having emanated from that boundless darkness that is the absolute essence of existence. The force is considered to be lacking in some people, who, as a consequence, are unfit to absorb the metaphysical teachings of the organization and unable to reach the self-actualization that is the goal of its members. The FAQ insists, however, that this should not be interpreted as justification for social hierarchies, and that individuals who carry the Dark Flame within them should not be understood as superior creatures.

Although the subject is not elaborated upon in the FAQ, it is apparent from other writings associated with the movement that Satan, in the theology of the Satanic Reds, is connected both to the inner force described above and the “Boundless Darkness” held to be the center of existence. Satan is the “dark force” that permeates all of nature and motivates all things to act according to their inner nature:

> The Boundless Darkness Itself is SAT. The ACTION of emanating out of, unfolding out of, springing forth, is TAN. The motivator and the act of motivating all things are together: Satan. Satan is that which is the origin of all and the unmoved mover, and it is described by both the unfolding and the thing unfolded: Satan.[19]

In connection with this interpretation of the Devil, the FAQ also expresses one of the common motifs of older occult discourse on the Satanic, for example, the concept of Satan as misunderstood by Christian theology. “[I]t stands to reason that we are talking about a Satan that is not what any Judaic, Christian or Islamic people think it is,” the text argues. “[W]e don’t accept the Judeo-Christian concepts for [*sic*] ‘Satan’ at all.”

The Dark Flame is also connected to the “self-actualization” or “self-evolving” of the individual. This process is conceptualized as a manifestation of an inner potential, inherent in the immanent divine force as it expresses itself in each individual: “All things have an individual characteristic, a unique identity that defines what they are and become.” Human beings

should therefore strive to actualize themselves based on self-understanding and avoid going against the inherent disposition of their inner nature. In this way they can participate in the emanation of the "Boundless Darkness."[20]

The FAQ and other texts connected to the Satanic Reds are characterized by viewpoints and terminology taken from Asian, especially Indian, philosophy and religion, as well as frequent appeals to the natural sciences.[21] In many of the organization's texts the Asian elements overshadow the references to European religious expressions, including references to conceptions of the Devil taken from modern Satanism or earlier discourse on the satanic. Among the allusions to Asian religions the Indian ones are most prominent, although references to other cultures, such as the Chinese, can also be found. This syncretic tendency is tied together by the concept of the dark doctrines, a tradition of metaphysical teachings manifesting in different cultures around the world and said to originate in "the prior world age."[22] The dark doctrines or dark tradition is said to be primarily associated with "Eastern lands," although it has sometimes manifested in European religious history.

The politics of the Satanic Reds are given a prominent place in the FAQ and, as mentioned, probably constitutes one of its more original aspects in the context of turn-of-the-millennium Satanism. The section dedicated to the political beliefs of the movement is also surprisingly concrete, presenting its views not just on matters such as the separation of church and state, but on healthcare and public education as well. In this respect the FAQ is more or less representative of the role politics plays in the ideological discourse of the organization. The website contains several texts that chiefly deal with politics from an eclectic Socialist or Communist perspective, offering for example Satanic commentaries on writings by Mao Zedong. The union of Satanism and Socialism is seldom explicitly explained, but the official writings sometimes imply that the use of Soviet and other communist symbols and references constitute a kind of playful subversion of the stereotypes employed by political opponents. The use of such symbols, just like their Satanic counterparts in religious discourse, entails a conscious appropriation of roles considered antithetical to the dominant ideology of the North American society in which the Satanic Reds mostly operate. In some instances, however, the prominent nineteenth-century tradition of Satan as the defender of the oppressed in the work of writers like Michelet or Bakunin is invoked in a way that tends to legitimize the interpretation of the devil from a

leftist political perspective.[23]

Genre and Audience

There has been a FAQ on the website of the Satanic Reds at least since 2001, but possibly even earlier. The FAQ is the most recent example of a long series of similar texts.[24] The Satanic milieu of the late 1990s in which the group emerged was in many ways shaped by the growing popularity of the internet, a context in which the text is firmly situated by its genre. The FAQ is a clear attempt to explain the viewpoints and terminology of the Satanic Reds to beginners who may be curious about Satanism.

Reception and Influence

The Satanic Reds exerted a certain influence on the broader Satanic milieu around the year 2000.[25] It is today, however, relatively clear that their impact was limited. The major Satanic organizations like the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set show little indication of having been influenced by the Satanic Reds, and newer groups seldom display direct signs of influence either. Furthermore, the internet presence of the organization appears to be weakening,[26] and at the time of writing literature related to the Satanic Reds is hard to come by.[27]

Beyond the direct impact of the Satanic Reds, it can be noted that the association between Satanic symbolism and revolutionary politics that the organization often alluded to has existed in different articulations since the nineteenth century and will likely find new expressions in the future. Recent examples illustrate the continuing allure that motivates some to unite Satanism and politics. Since 2012, the increasingly visible and successful organization called the Satanic Temple (see separate chapter in the present volume),[28] describing itself as a platform for "politically aware Satanists," has been engaged in various types of high-profile activism, often with a humorous approach.[29]

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Excerpts from The Satanic Reds, "FAQ for Satanic Reds—Social Realist Organization" (circa 2001)

1) Why do you call yourselves Satanic Reds?

We call ourselves this because we are Satanic in the sense of Sat and Tan, the

Dark Doctrines or Dark Tradition.[30] We are Red in the sense of radical (though the association with that color seems to have changed in the USA recently to mean conservative). Red has always been associated with "Red Devil."

2) Are you Satanists?

The answer to that is yes and no—because it would entirely depend on what you mean by the word "Satanist." First of all, using the word "Satan," Carducci, in his "Hymn To Satan," echoed the same concepts and ideas we echo for Social Realism; and Michael Bakunin regarded Satan in the same manner as us when we speak of Social Realism. When Jules Michelet wrote "Satanism and Witchcraft," a book that the majority of people interested in the Left Hand Path or Wicca had back before the late 1960s, it was about exploited peasants rallying around a mythic-heroic figure: Satan—in opposition to an oppressive Christian political feudalism of that time period.
[. . .]
No matter what Left Hand Path you follow, or even if it's some alternate religion magickal Right Hand Path, no matter what you or your culture call it, the political forces of reaction present in some countries call it ALL Satanism or Satanic. They consider Wicca, most of Hinduism, all of Tantra, Taoism, most of New Age, Voodoo and even, in some places, the Jewish religion and Atheism to be Satanic, too; depending on which fanatics you speak to. Some fanatics call the Pope in the Vatican "the Beast" and consider the Catholic religion "a Satanic Cult." Some fanatics consider Mohammed, the Prophet of the Moslems, to be a "Satanic Terrorist." And so forth. So there is the RADICAL reason for us to call ourselves Satanic: it's radical and in your face. So, even followers of mainstream monotheistic religions are not immune from the brand "Satanic."

Some of the members and founders of the SR prefer to see what we represent as wholly outside such Western notions of Satan or Satanism. Then again, there are many others that categorically state that the Dark Tradition is Real Satanism. We have no problem agreeing to disagree—one man's God is another man's Satan.

3) What is the Satan that SR espouses?

The Satan in the Dark Tradition we espouse is Sat and Tan, Being and Becoming, and we don't accept the Judeo-Christian concepts for "Satan" at all. We are making a pun out of Sat and Tan and we are the first organization to ever do that. Then again, if what we know as the Boundless Chaotic Darkness is Nyarlathotep in our own older non-standard lingo, and Nyarlathotep is Satan, it stands to reason that we are talking about a Satan that is not what any Judaic, Christian or Islamic people think it is. The SR org sticks to standard words, even if they are foreign words.

This system is from an ancient tradition that is 1. genuinely Left Hand Path of the kind having nothing whatsoever to do with "breaking silly taboos," 2. has a Boundless Darkness as the Prime Force, 3. has a "flaming light" within the Darkness that flashes out and becomes all things due to the Urge of the Boundless Darkness, 4. has that Dark Flame as being within people, IF they let it flow. Only people with that Flame within can self actualize, if they choose to do that. Here are examples: Sat: The one ever-present Reality in the infinite world; the divine essence which IS, but cannot be said to "exist" because it is Absoluteness, or Being-ness Itself. Satta: the One and Sole Existence. Sattva: Understanding; quiescence in divine knowledge; a Bodhisattva is a person that possesses this. Satya: Supreme Truth. Satya Yuga: the Golden Age of the age of truth, actually the first Yuga, but often equated with the Trita Yuga (last age). Tan means to "stretch forth" to "become." Words such as Tantra, Tanmatri have the root word "tan" in them.

As for Sat and Tan, legitimate words: It is highly possible that the Hebrews committed a cultural inversion on the word Sat, since they did have contact with Persians who definitely DID invert ALL the ancient Sanskrit (Shivaite) concepts. The Hebrews did not invert the word Tan because the Tanaim, in Hebrew, are those who "know what the angels know." The Tanaim are the True Magi. This type of Sat/Tan Dark Doctrines Satanism can be seen in various organizations that run in various ways, localized or loosely connected. This type of Satanism includes the Pythagorean system on the pentacle (the pentalphas), which correspond to the Five Dharmas, and the pentamychos system, which corresponds to the fearsome or towo aspects that defend the Dharmas or Five Principles. The Five principles, as seen in nature, are parts of what the Dark Force IN Nature does, as it permeates and motivates all of nature. [. . .]

3.1) What does this SR Satanism, or Dark Tradition

basically consist of?

The Dark Tradition is an emanation doctrine about the Boundless Darkness, (No Name, Aditi, Ain Soph, Apeiron, Brahman, Thatness, Nyarlathotep, etc.) and the Flame, (Viraj, Vajra, Logos, Chi, Ki, etc.). The Flame is in that All Pervading Darkness and from that, there is the doctrine of Being and Becoming.

1. Unknown—Boundless Darkness (or Thatness).—That which is Formless (Arupa).
2. Non-Being and Being (Asat and Sat). The intermediate being-state is BECOMING or stretching forth (Tan). This happens out of Necessity.
3. Emanation of a Light or a Flame as a seven-fold Formed (Rupa) and Ordered substance that Became all material (space/time, matter/energy) things.
4. Infusion and permeation of the Darkness as a five-fold formless chaotic "force" of some kind, into the seven which, in turn, drives all things on to ever greater change, complexity and diversity, relentlessly driving it on to change, to Become. It is from the five-fold that we get the Pentacle - based on the Orphic/Pythagorean original doctrine of "Tartaros." (Tartaros did not mean "hell" originally).

This Doctrine is totally unlike a creation doctrine; it is very much unlike paganism with many gods and goddess and half-godling "children of" the gods/goddesses. It is not dualistic at all. It is not for everyone! One is either Of It, or they are not.

In addition, there are elaborations: how that darkness is always categorized in five distinct ways as it acts on "the nature" around us and how the Flame is within us as Kundalini. How the Flame comes into living beings from the All Pervading Darkness, goes through living things as a Flame or kind of "Light" and then returns to that One Darkness. How the All Pervading Darkness itself never increases or decreases all the time this goes on. There are also doctrines about what lacks this Flame within. There is no judgement on such people. It is just that the Tradition is not told to them—hence it is esoteric. (Times have changed.) I could say it this way: Aditi, Vach, Viraj (Vajra), or Asat, Sat and Tan are the same things, recognizable to anyone that knows this, as Kether, Binah, Hochmah. Same things.

This is one solid tradition amongst MANY whole cultures, parts of cultures and peoples. It is universally said to have been The Adamantine Doctrine by which all society was governed in a "Golden Age" during the Satya Yuga, which is a prior world age (some systems have other names for the last world age). It is distinct from the trinity traditions, distinct from the dualistic traditions, which oppose light and dark. It is distinct from paganism.

It is distinct from the solar cults. It is NOT a salvation doctrine nor is there any kind of notion of a “personal anthropomorphic-type Being” in the One Darkness.

It has nothing to do with rebelliousness or the mundane world of the herd and/or hypocrisy. It has nothing to do with that pro or con—all that is irrelevant.

We have unified what belongs together as a core doctrine: The Dark Tradition.

4) Satan has always been seen as the Dark Lord, Dark Principle, or Dark Force. Does this tie it back to the Christian or horror-show view?

No. The Sat is Being/Truth. Mahakala is “Dark Lord of Transcendent Awareness.” Sri Kala Chakra is “Lord Time Devourer.” Karabog is “Black God” perceived more as a non-centralized force or spirit in everything. Our use of “Dark Lord” or “dark force” ties back to these things. Seeing, and above all feeling this force/principle/etc. as permeating and motivating all of nature, Satanists and others have revered this as either an Atheistic force, Deistic Principle, or Theistic Deity. Keep in mind that the Flame that burns in us and flows as Kundalini comes from this Boundless Darkness and returns to it. We do revere our own Flame!

5) Isn’t some of that Dark Tradition Satanic stuff syncretistic or a synthesis of many things?

Yes. What we present, especially in the sold Monographs, is the Dark Tradition stripped of cultural baggage that was added much later by various cultures. This tradition is not in all cultures, but it is in some cultures in part or in whole, and we do write about these and explain it in detail without degenerating into the abstract or the hypermystical.

Incorporated into the Dark Traditions are all things that touch on it or focus on it: Hermeticism, certain aspects of the Kaballa, Taoism, certain whole schools of Tantra, Shivaism and Vedanta wherefrom we get the words Sat and Tan; Orphism and Pythagoreanism wherefrom we get the pentacle to represent the five Truths/Wisdoms (which are identical to the five Dharmas

of Tantra). It is interesting that the root word Sat in modern Sanskrit means Truth of the inner kind. In the West this, as Satan, got inverted to mean the Lie, or Satan as the Father of Lies. This could be one of the earliest known examples of cultural inversion, as just explained.

5.1) Do you have any roots in Chaos Magic or Magick?

No, none. They sort of have their roots in us from way back! Some of them do notice similarities. We used to have the entire Dark Tradition "translated" into a kind of HPL/Derleth/et.al. mythos lingo that various non-public groups used. Many Chaos Magicians caught the trend. Some of the old timers in that movement do see a strong similarity with some of the Dark Tradition information.
[. . .]

5.2) Do you have any roots in Thelema?

No, though there are definite similarities that Thelemites in the Satanic Reds Organization recognize and have written about. Crowley did study some Eastern Traditions, therefore there will be similarities, just as there will be similarities seen by some that have studied Gurdjieff.

5.3) Do you have any roots in Theosophy?

No, though there are a few Theosophists in our organization that think we present the Real Deal in a very pure form with nothing hidden away. Blavatsky certainly saw some of the same basic core Doctrines that the Satanic Reds know of, such as the Hindu Creation Myth, but she altered them to suit her own Right Hand Path purposes and either put some Hinayana into them or Christianized them. Some of the text in "The Darkness is One," which was made into a song by Tani Jantsang in the early 1960s, is remarkably similar to the Hindu Creation Myth and to what Blavatsky took, however she took it pretty far from the original non-human, cosmogenic intention.

5.4) Do you have any roots in the Witchcraft or Wicca movement?

No, though there are Wiccans in our organization that resonate to the "feel"

of it.

5.5) Do you have any roots in LaVeyan Satanism?

No, absolutely none, though LaVey did hand out two high titles to two of the founders of Satanic Reds, but these people never used these titles on anything they ever wrote or sold. The “spirit” of the Dark Tradition might be said to be anathema to the “spirit” of anything LaVeyan, despite the fact that LaVey handed out those titles for the Dark Tradition information. High titles were handed out to another of the founders by quite a few public Satanic groups; none of these were ever used on any published material.

5.6) Do you have any roots in the Temple of Set?

No, none, though there are some Setians that see a strong similarity between their Set concept and The Sat. We both have the Doctrine of Becoming in our organizations.

5.7) Do you have roots in Atheism?

No. though some atheists read our stuff and translate it easily into big bang science and biology.
[. . .]

6) Is the SR capitalist, Socialist, or Communist?

We are sort of both. Dirigist capitalism is a form of Socialism! We speak of the Bill of Rights and the New Deal. Forces of reaction have made absurd slanders against programs that benefited all hard-working people. They have many times called President F. D. Roosevelt a RED! Well, if F. D. Roosevelt is a Red, then so are we!

The point is this: any kind of social planning necessary to have in a whole nation, especially a modern one, that serves to benefit the hard-working people, present workers or retired workers, gets labeled Red. Even liberals are called Red! Anyone who is TOLERANT is labeled a Red! Anyone who is in favor of women’s rights, feminism, gay rights, and against racism is called a Red! In fact, anyone in favor of tolerance toward alternative religions is called a Red or a “pinko commie.” This is not new! And so, we call ourselves

REDS!

7) Why do you insist on ten political statements for membership qualification and not on a belief system?

Because those ten statements are political in the practical sense, but on a much higher or inner sense, they are spiritual. People who tend to agree with self serving things that also serve others, have a good, balanced character.

7.1) What are the political statements?

1. Do you agree that WORKERS should be paid a livable wage, a wage that Labor Unions would probably demand, and that workers have a right to organize? A neighborhood and/or community filled with overworked and underpaid workers eventually becomes a slum since the people living next to you can't afford the necessities of life with a few frills. A stress filled community is a dangerous community.
2. Do you agree that HEALTH CARE is not a privilege but a Human Right that all citizens should have in a civilized technological country? Included in this would be Medicare for our formerly hard-working elderly folks who are now losing all the money they worked honestly and hard for due to the high cost of prescription drugs. Included in this is the strengthening of the Social Security System which once guaranteed a continued good life after retiring from a life of work. Sick people who can't afford health care could spread the plague. Plagues do not discriminate between rich or poor.
3. Do you agree that PUBLIC EDUCATION should be available to all citizens, not just in primary and secondary schools, but including day-care if necessary and up through college for all who qualify in a race/gender blind merit system where the best, no matter who they are, are encouraged to excel? This would mean an EQUAL RIGHT, blind equal rights, to excel or fail in a public education system. An educated nation is a civilized nation. Educated people are informed people.
4. Do you agree that CORPORATE WELFARE must stop - and that money needs to get back to the workers who make everything, and not drain out to the big corporations? Corporations have the same rights as citizens, but right now they do not have to abide by the same laws governing citizens. They should be made to. When they harm the workers, they harm the country that the workers live in.
5. Do you believe in stringently maintaining a SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE so that people not only have freedom OF religion, but also freedom FROM religion if they so choose? Right now, Congress can make no laws regarding religion. But City Ordinances can be passed and States can make laws.
6. Do you believe in striving for a clean and healthy ENVIRONMENT and an end to needless environmental destruction? This includes ANIMAL RIGHTS for animals other than human animals when it comes to non-health care uses of animals. Animals need not be slaughtered for vanity purposes. This entails working for clean energy (or cleaner) and making this affordable to all citizens. Note that this does not mean we are anti-technology or Luddites; we are in favor of new technology being developed and used (we already have much of it) to create a less wasteful and clean environment.
7. Do you believe that the Multi-national corporations and Trans-national corporations need to

HIRE OUR OWN CITIZENS and not wander outside for cheap labor (who are like SCABS in Union talk)? A scab is a person that works for super low wages and takes your job away from you. You can't possibly live on a wage as low as the scab is working for—for instance, $1.00 an hour.

8. Do you believe in cutting the military budget and putting more of our own tax dollars to the service of the people? This incorporates the idea that we need not fear foreign invasion if people own guns! This includes the idea that we don't need to waste tax payer's money on being the "police of the world" or trying to solve the problems of other sovereign nations. The military budget need not be used to make MORE nuclear weapons, it could be used to enhance the nation and definitely, for the quality of life of the men and women that are in the military. The old G.I. Bill was much better than the new one in terms of quality of life for our armed forces.
9. Do you believe that in any civilized society that PEOPLE should be put BEFORE PROFITS? Keep in mind, the key word here is CIVILIZED.
10. Do you agree with us on these very important issues pertaining to Occultism of any kind: we are DEAD AGAINST bloody rituals and/or human or animal sacrifices; we are DEAD AGAINST policies that promote sexual relations with children - and by that we mean CHILDREN, not males and females who are nubile and already having sex or who live in countries that promote marriage of younger people who are nubile (physically and biologically at the child-bearing age). We mean children. Support for anything like this is one of the biggest dangers threatening Occultism and/or Alternate Religion. Groups that have links to such things, or organizations that advocate them, have their own websites. Linking to them has nothing to do with "freedom of speech." Actively linking to them is active promotion of what they advocate, or what they promote, it's giving them free advertising. If you have such links, do not link to us or try to join us. If you wish to join us, remove those links. Freedom of speech means nothing without responsibility to the self. There is also Freedom of CHOICE.

7.2) Does a person have to belong to any specific political party?

No. People in many of the major and minor political parties often find that they are in agreement only with some of their party's platform and have their own ideas about other issues. SR presently has members from every political party, major or minor, out there. Obviously, they agree with these ten points.

8) Does SR regard people that feel this dark force and flame as better than those who do not?

No. Some people have good ears for music. Some people are tone deaf. It's a matter of tone deaf people not trying to be musicians. It's not hard to tell who is tone deaf and who is not and no one has to know a thing about music to be able to hear it correctly and/or harmonize with melodies. They are not, as whole human beings, lesser or inferior to those born with good ears for pitch and harmony—but they aren't musical at all. Likewise, the tone deaf can learn to become experts on the subject of music. They still will never be able

to “Know” music the way a person with good ears knows it immediately on hearing it. The sensory experience is going to be different. That is the only analogy we can give because it fits.

9) What is the hammer and sickle in your sigil?

The hammer is a symbol of labor and the sickle is a symbol of farming. These joined together represent industry and agriculture united. The two symbols appear in the Pentagon in the center of our Pentacle. That Pentagon is a House; it is not inverted; it is the correct way and, in the Dark Doctrine, represents YOU. But in a worldly sense, it would represent the world and the world runs due to agriculture and industry. Our House is a house of farmers and workers—all working and making society run. What is a big corporation without the little workers? It’s an empty building. What is a big corporation that hires little workers outside the nation? It’s a group of people that have increased unemployment within the country. What do they make to sell us? Who is going to buy things when no one can afford things? The House must be put in order and have a strong Foundation, or it will fall. Nations need a strong, self-sufficient agrarian and industrial base if they are to survive as healthy nations.

10) What do you use the pentacle for?

The Five Points of the Pentacle, or rather the “Blazing Angles” that radiate from the House represent things in the Dark Doctrine and these ideas come directly from Orphism and Pythagoreanism. Starting from the top right point, going clockwise, and making this very simple: 1. Our Roots in the sense of physical generations. 2. Justice implying natural stratification. 3. The Anima or Vajra Root of our individual Being and our animal nature. 4. Our Inner Well-being or Psyche. 5. Nature in us and around us and in which we live. The X that is formed by the crossed lines where the top point of the inner Pentagon (House) is, represents Heart, Feelings, Eros.
[. . .]

11) You are not like other satanic organizations out there at all. Why not?

Satanic Reds exists as an alternative to the "Satanism" that is so tied up with Christianity or silly horror-show antics. It is, in fact, a Left Hand Path organization as far as occult doctrines go. The doctrines are wholly outside of the more familiar Judeo-Christian world view that people that get into "Satanism" have. The concepts of becoming (xeper) and Inner Will (thelema) are in these Doctrines, and always were from ancient times. The wailing angst of people rebelling against their own Christian backgrounds is wholly left out - it's not in SR, it doesn't exist, we do not cater to that type of person.

12) Are you a hierarchical organization with a hierarchy of titles such as Priest(ess), Magus, etc?

No, titles mean nothing in the SR. Every Comrade is given a title of People's Commissar, including the founders of this organization. We are not a hierarchical organization at all.
[. . .]

20) Are you against other Satanic organizations or any other organizations?

We are not against any of the various Satanic organizations out there; if they are Deistic in the sense that they see Satan as a dark force in Nature, or Theistic where they see Satan as an actual being such as Lucifer or Set or Mephistopheles, or strictly atheist with Left Hand Path tradition more akin to martial arts, as long as they leave us be, do not harass or libel us and don't advocate SRA-type nonsense or prove to be nothing but inversionist anti-Christians. We are, however, against any satanic or other organization out there that is against us or that engages in harassment or slander of us.
[. . .]

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[1] Massimo Introvigne, *Satanism: A Social History* (Leiden: Brill, 2016) pp. 522–525. Jesper Petersen, "Modern Satanism: Dark Doctrines and Black Flames," in *Controversial New Religions*, ed. J. R. Lewis and J. Aa. Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) pp. 437–440. For Jantsang's and Marsh's version of their involvement with esoteric groups and interest in possible religious interpretations of the works of H. P. Lovecraft, see "The Roots of the Satanic Reds." http://www.satanicreds.org/satanicreds/sr-roots.html (retrieved January 2015).

[2] Jesper Aagaard Petersen, *Between Darwin and the Devil: Modern Satanism as Discourse, Milieu, and Self* (Trondheim: NTNU, 2011) p. 178.

[3] Or, at least, collective identities different from the "alien elite" of Laveyan Satanism. For LaVeyan ideas on individualism and non-conformity see Anton LaVey, *The Devil's Notebook* (Feral House, 1992).

[4] The clearest example of antinomianism within the Satanic Reds would probably be the use of cultural symbols with negative associations, like the inverted pentagram, or deities like the Lovecraftian Nyarlathotep. It should also be pointed out, however, that Jantsang several times criticizes the breaking of "silly taboos" associated with Satanism and the Left-hand Path.

[5] See for example Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen, "Introduction: At the Devil's Crossroads," in *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*, Per Faxneld and Jesper Aa. Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) p. 8. Granholm more or less agrees with this view but also suggests the term as a possible alternative to (although not completely overlapping) the—according to him—troublesome concept of Satanism. Kennet Granholm, "The Left-Hand Path and Post Satanism," in *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aa. Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) pp. 209–228.

[6] Granholm, "The Left-Hand Path and Post Satanism," p. 213.

[7] This individualism could also be interpreted as the self-religion viewed by Petersen as one of the main traits of modern Satanism. In fact, more or less the same phenomenon is described by Granholm and Petersen from somewhat different theoretical perspectives. Petersen, *Between Darwin and the Devil*, pp. 123f.

[8] The question of the movement's relationship to the discourse of self-deification is open to interpretation. The concept is not explicitly emphasized, but on the other hand neither is it necessarily in conflict with the worldview of the organization.

[9] Although, the movement's emic understanding of the concept is somewhat different from Granholm's.

[10] I find it useful, as Petersen and others following him have done, to distinguish between discourse on the Satanic, by which I mean the expression of statements regarding the Devil and his followers in general, and Satanic discourse, by which I mean a discourse that self-identifies as Satanism. It should be noted that by using the latter concept in this way I depart from Petersen's similar but more exclusive use of the same term, which I find too narrowly focused on Anton LaVey and his reception. Petersen, *Between Darwin and the Devil*, pp. 62–67.

[11] The importance of this tendency clearly varies, however. It could be considered strong in movements like the Dragon Rouge or the Typhonian Order, and less so, but not absent, in the Church of Satan or the Temple of Set (see chapters on these movements in the present volume).

[12] Related concepts are, of course, common both in the occult movement of the early twentieth century and in the later Left-hand Path organizations, where this inner force is often associated with a disembedded and somewhat Westernized version of the kundalini, taken from Indian hatha yoga or other tantric expressions of Hinduism (see chapter on Aleister Crowley in the present volume).

[13] Political activism within the Left-hand Path is perhaps uncommon but not unheard of. Another example would be the engagement of organizations like the Temple of Set with animal-rights ideologies. See Kennet Granholm, "Left Hand Path Magic and Animal Rights," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 12:4 (2009) pp. 28–49.

[14] On Internet Satanism and the fragmentation of Satanic discourse, see Jesper Petersen, "Modern Satanism: Dark Doctrines and Black Flames," in *Controversial New Religions*, ed. James Lewis and Jesper Petersen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) p. 438. On the polyvocal nature of Satanism online as well as an attempt to map the internet presence of some of the major representatives of the

Satanic milieu, see Petersen, *Between Darwin and the Devil*, pp. 266–297. For further reading on internet and Satanism, Rafal Smoczynski, "Cyber Satanism and Imagined Satanism," in *Contemporary religious Satanism*, ed. Jesper Petersen (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009); James Lewis "Appendix III: Satanist Survey," in *Satanism Today*, ed. James Lewis (Santa Barbara: ABC clio, 2001).

[15] One such example was the Black Metal genre that became popular in the 1990s and often articulated Satanic discourse of various levels of seriousness (see separate chapter in the present volume).

[16] I agree with Petersen that some form of "ideological genealogy, often in the form of some relation to Anton Szandor LaVey," is an important trait of Satanic discourse, at least if we are talking about the discourse within the milieu of late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century Satanism. However, I do not agree that such a genealogy constitutes a necessary qualification for an organization to be considered Satanic, nor do I consider LaVey to be the first individual to articulate a Satanic discourse. Petersen, *Between Darwin and the Devil*.

[17] See for example the essay "Want to Know What I Think?" (2004) by Jantsang, where LaVey is mentioned more or less respectfully but other members of the Church of Satan are dismissed as "cult mentality-types." The Temple of Set is the focus of a more detailed criticism. http://www.geocities.com/satanicreds/oth-orgs.html. On the other hand, there are more critical views like the polemical essay titled (with typical Satanic Red bluntness) "Satanism and Witchcraft Before LaVey: He Didn't Start Anything, He Ruined It." http://www.satanicreds.org/satanicreds/laveymyth.html.

[18] For an example see "Dark force." http://www.satanicreds.org/satanicreds/d-force.html.

[19] Comrades in Satanic Reds, "The Nine Satanic Postulates." http://www.satanicreds.org/satanicreds/9-sat-tan.html.

[20] Comrades in Satanic Reds, "The Nine Satanic Postulates." http://www.satanicreds.org/satanicreds/9-sat-tan.html.

[21] The latter is a clear example of the type of scientism that Olav Hammer analyzes in Olav Hammer, *Claiming Knowledge* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

[22] Tani Jantsang, "Unity of the Dark Tradition." http://www.satanicreds.org/satanicreds/unity-dt.html.

[23] For examples of the use of Satanic imagery in historical left-wing politics see Per Faxneld, "The Devil Is Red: Socialist Satanism in the Nineteenth Century," *Numen* 60 (2013) pp. 528–558.

[24] My discussion is based on the version of the FAQ that is available on the webpage of the Satanic Reds at the time of writing. This version is more comprehensive and detailed than many of the earlier versions but is still clearly related to its predecessors and includes passages that were present already in the earliest versions of the text that are now accessible on the Internet Archive wayback machine.

[25] The dark doctrines, at least, had a broader influence than the members of the Satanic Reds. Petersen, *Between Darwin and the Devil*, p. 97. It is for instance possible to find examples where a representative of the Order of the Left-hand Path talks about concepts like Sat and Tan in a way that seems very similar to the doctrines of the Satanic Reds. Gavin Baddeley, *Lucifer Rising* (London: Plexus, 1999) pp. 221f.

[26] E.g., almost none of the links on the official website are functioning.

[27] The webpage still contains advertisement for literature related to the dark doctrines, but the complicated payment options available (e.g., sending cash in a letter to a private American address) probably deter potential customers. A cursory review of web-based antiquarian marketplaces that are usually well stocked on occult and Satanic literature, like abebooks.com, indicates that no significant market for books related to the organization exists today.

[28] Manon Hedenborg White and Fredrik Gregorius, "The Satanic Temple: Secularist Activism and

Occulture in the American Political Landscape," *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* 10:1 (2019) pp. 89–110.

[29] Among other things the organization has protested the use of corporal punishment in education and taken a stand for reproductive rights.

[30] https://www.satanicreds.org/satanicreds/FAQ.html.

18

Thomas Karlsson (Dragon Rouge), *Kabbala, kliffot och den goetiska magin* (2004)

Fredrik Gregorius

The magical order Dragon Rouge was founded in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1989 by Thomas Karlsson (1972–). Karlsson had for a long time, despite his young age, been a part of the small alternative spiritual milieu in Stockholm. In the late 1980s, he worked part time in the city's most famous New Age bookstore, Vattumannen (Aquarius), a primary meeting place not only for those interested in New Age ideas but also for people with broader spiritual and religious interests. During this period Karlsson claimed to have meet a group of people who were involved in "Typhonian and Yezidi magic."[1] This group was apparently active in Gothenburg and is said to have been an early influence on Karlsson.

A formative incident in the history of the order took place in 1989 when Karlsson decided to travel to Africa with an Englishman called "Saul" whom he would describe in his autobiography as a self-destructive, even suicidal, person. Despite having only known the Englishman for a short time, Karlsson decided to accompany him to Africa on an adventure.[2] According to Karlsson, the journey was filled with tension and quarrels. In the end they went their separate ways, and Saul continued by himself. On the journey south, Karlsson had visited Marrakesh, where a curious incident took place. While he was sitting in a café, a man walked up to him and proclaimed that a temple was going to be built, "A temple for the Red Dragon."[3] Karlsson took this as a prophecy and an indication that he himself should create a temple for the Dragon when he returned to Sweden.[4]

The reliability of these stories is difficult to ascertain. Finnish scholar of religions Kennet Granholm, who has made the most significant studies of

Dragon Rouge, claims that there is no reason to doubt the stories as such but that they do serve as a form of legitimatizing narrative, giving the order a sense of authority by highlighting an older lineage.[5]

Stories that provide an impressive lineage for one's own organization constitutes, as Granholm points out, a common trope in the internal historiography of occult groups, giving them a sense of mission. Granholm himself avoids drawing any further conclusions regarding the connection between the founding of Dragon Rouge and the image of Karlsson himself as somehow chosen to lead and build the new temple. The highlighting of Karlsson's role as founder is, however, an interesting aspect of the story that is further reinforced by the more general intermingling of the history of the order and the biography of Karlsson.

After his return to Sweden, Karlsson consulted with a small group of friends and decided to found Dragon Rouge shortly after. In the first year the order was a private affair, but on New Year's Eve 1990 Dragon Rouge was ritually declared open to new members. At first the order mainly recruited its adherents in Stockholm, where it became a part of a small but growing esoteric scene. During the same period that Dragon Rouge was founded, other esoteric organizations become active in Stockholm. Ordo Templi Orientis began to build a presence, and the Temple of Psychic Youth had been established a while before, having a small number of members in both Stockholm and Gothenburg. Other active movements were neo-shamanism, often oriented toward Nordic mythology, and Wicca.[6] In this environment Dragon Rouge was one of many organizations that sought to find a place in a small but growing occult market. This can partially explain the need for a lineage-based origin story as mentioned above, as many of their competitors made such claims to legitimacy.

In the early years of Dragon Rouge, the organization seems to have gone through a period of trial and error, seeking inspiration from many disparate sources. Two of these sources were Kenneth Grant and Temple of Set, or rather the writings of Ronald K. Barret, who was the High Priest of the latter organization 1979–1982.[7]

In the early 1990s, Dragon Rouge seems to have grown at a slow pace, being mainly active in Stockholm. The group held meetings at Karlsson's home in the suburb Tumba, but also in cemeteries and other outdoor locations that served as fitting settings for magical workings. Dragon Rouge did not call its ideology Satanism, but used the term Dark Magic.[8] The term was not

that clearly defined, but was consciously left open to interpretations. The same thing could be said about the concept of the Left-hand Path that was often used to characterize the teachings of the order. What could be considered the primary characteristic of the order's teaching was the idea that humanity should strive to become whole by exploring dark and hidden regions of the cosmos as well as the psyche. Dragon Rouge's focus was therefore on the darker aspects of magic, which included demonology and the use of Satanic imagery. Apart from Grant and Barret, Dragon Rouge explored Nordic magic, kundalini yoga, and alchemy, thus over time creating an increasingly syncretistic and open system.

Apart from welcoming new members, Dragon Rouge had chosen to become accessible to Swedish media. In 1995, an article was published in the Swedish tabloid *Aftonbladet* with the headline "Här döps ett barn till Djävulen" ("Here a child is baptized to the Devil").[9] The article described a baptismal ceremony and published the parent's claim that they wanted their child to believe in the Devil. Dragon Rouge denied that the ceremony was a Satanic baptism and instead described it as a Draconic blessing. The use of Satanic symbols, and the fact that the parents of the child being baptized were outspoken Satanists, did not do anything good for the organization's image in the media, however.

The middle of the 1990s was a period in Sweden's cultural history that saw radical social changes, a financial crisis, and massive privatizations. In this period, the fear of Satanism grew, and Sweden saw a minor manifestation of the same Satanic panic that had swept over America in the 1980s.[10] Part of the reason for this was the growing Black Metal scene and the violence that accompanied segments of the subculture that emerged around it (see separate chapter in the present volume). In this context, where actual Satanists outside musical contexts were scarce, Dragon Rouge would become a recurring object of attention in Swedish media. While the media was often hostile and portrayed the order in a negative light, the exposure quickly led to a growing interest in the organization. For Dragon Rouge, this was a mixed blessing. On the one hand, they gained new members rapidly and soon became the largest occult order in Sweden, with over five hundred members.

The rapid growth also led to problems, however. The new members came from all walks of life, and more than a few had become attracted to the order based on its sensationalized media image. This led to a rather chaotic situation, which was further complicated by the fact that the order up to this

point lacked a clear organizational structure. The early Dragon Rouge could be more or less characterized as a semi-organized circle of friends where new members often had some social ties to the existing membership. As a result of the rapid growth, Dragon Rouge became more structured and also started to produce a correspondence course in magic that new members were expected to follow.[11] The order also acquired their first semi-permanent temple, on Drottninggatan in central Stockholm, and later in 1999 acquired their permanent temple on Kungsholmen and simultaneously established local lodges at several locations in Sweden. Dragon Rouge also became more restrained in its contacts with the media. While becoming a member would remain relatively easy, some basic requirements—like a personal letter of introduction—were added, and further rules were implemented for the local lodges, several of which were eventually closed down. This led to a larger degree of stability and a smaller but more structured organization.

In the twenty-first century the order expanded internationally. At present, the most prominent group outside of Sweden seems to be in Italy. Over the years, members of the order, and particularly Thomas Karlsson, have published books on their system of magic, and several of these have also been translated into English. In terms of membership, Dragon Rouge has been going through times of expansion and decrease over the years, often having a membership of around three hundred.[12]

In 2017 there was a major reorganization within Dragon Rouge. Several of the older members left or became inactive, and Thomas Karlsson started to reconstruct the order after a more linear model, with a larger focus on international and online collaborations rather than local physical lodges. If this will change in the future is, however, uncertain. On October 31, 2017, Thomas Karlsson declared the start of what he termed the New Reformation and published several statements online regarding the future of the order and their social ideals. Around this time, several long-time members also left the group. At the moment, a lot is uncertain regarding the future of Dragon Rouge.

Kabbala, kliffot och den goetiska magin (2004)

Origin

The text reproduced in the present volume was written for public

consumption, and while representing the ideas formulated within the Dragon Rouge, it was not intended exclusively for members. “The Fall of Lucifer” is an excerpt from *Qabalah, Qliphoth and Goetic Magic* by the order’s founder, Thomas Karlsson, and was first published in Swedish in 2004. The book has since been republished several times in translations into several languages, and it constitutes something of an introduction to the teachings of Dragon Rouge.

Content

Dragon Rouge does not regard itself as a Satanic organization and has from the start rejected the designation. Instead, members of the order often see themselves as followers of the Left-hand Path and practitioners of what the order calls “Dark Magic.” As mentioned above, Dark Magic is a vaguely defined term. In a 2015 lecture given by Thomas Karlsson in Stockholm, he seems to regard “dark” as synonymous with hidden, meaning that the dark magician seeks out that which is unrevealed.[13] Granholm explains the system as related to individuation and self-deification:

> Rather than being static, individuality is considered to be enveloped in [*sic*] on-going process [*sic*] of transformation and development, which, if harnessed correctly, can ultimately lead the magician into a divine state of being. *True* individuality is thus something that can be achieved, but it is not automatically possessed by human beings. The dark magician goes through two distinct processes of individuation. The first is the stage that all humans go through, the process of “becoming an individual in relation to the mother.” The second stage is achieved through dark magical practice and leads to a second birth through which “we become individuals in relation to existence.”[14]

The term Left-hand Path is in itself contested and has been given significantly different interpretations by different groups and individuals. Originally a concept that entered the field of Western esotericism through Helena Blavatsky, who used it to describe black magic, it was later taken up by Aleister Crowley, who likewise saw it as a form of black magic or spiritual failure.[15] Most likely the first to use it as a self-described form of spirituality was Anton LaVey, who was influenced by the Theosophical use of the term. Later, groups have emerged that seek to combine it with the Indian concept of *vama marga*, with a strong focus on antinomianism, here understood as the breaking of taboos in order to liberate the self from social and cultural conditioning. Granholm seeks to define the Left-hand Path as a system of self-deification through antinomianism and sees Dragon Rouge as an

example of this.[16] Satanism can be used as an expression of antinomianism, but according to Granholm it serves little purpose in Dragon Rouge. Still, as we will see, Satanic symbols and references to Satanic beings are not difficult to find within the textual and ritual corpus of the order.

In the initiatory curriculum of Dragon Rouge, members can choose to work with whatever symbolic system that fits their preferences—but there are some systems that have been more prominent, like rune magic, astral work, kundalini meditations, and qliphotic and goetic magic. It is primarily in the last two categories that we find references to Satan and similar deities. Two diabolic figures seem to appear most frequently in texts related to the order.[17] One is Samael, often used in kabbalistic works, and the other is Lucifer. The view of Lucifer within Dragon Rouge is based upon the counter-reading of Milton that has influenced interpretations of the figure since the eighteenth century. Lucifer is related to knowledge and wisdom, being the type of light-bringer figure first established in Romantic Satanism.[18] This implies that although Dragon Rouge is not a Satanic order, the group is very much part of the same discourse that created modern Satanism.

"The Fall of Lucifer" is a retelling of the story of the Garden of Eden, a recurring narrative in Satanic discourse.[19] Lucifer is identified with the serpent and portrayed in a sympathetic manner. The narrative is reminiscent of similar versions of the story, told by Aleister Crowley and others. In Dragon Rouge's version, however, the story is told imbedded in a rather technical kabalistic exegesis and is used to differentiate the Left-hand Path, as understood by the order, from other spiritual traditions built around the aspiration to reconcile humanity with God and reclaim the harmony that existed before the Fall.

Genre and Audience

Qabalah, Qliphoth and Goetic Magic was written for public consumption, and while representing the ideas formulated within the Dragon Rouge, it was not intended exclusively for members. The text mostly takes the form of a presentation of theory connected with the Dragon Rouges interpretation of Kabbalah and demonology. It does, however, also contain some practical instructions, likely meant to give an example of the type of ritual magic practiced within the order.

Reception and Influence

The degree of impact Dragon Rouge has had on the esoteric and occult milieu is difficult to ascertain. Since Karlsson's books started to be printed in English, the group's influence has grown. One example of the order's impact is possibly the popularization of qliphotic kabala within contemporary occultism. The popularity of the band Therion, founded by former Dragon Rouge member Christofer Johnsson, has been important in furthering the influence of the organization. The lyrics on Therion's albums, during Johnssons time in the order, were mostly written by Thomas Karlsson and can be said to directly reflect aspects of Dragon Rouge's philosophy. Dragon Rouge also seems to be increasing their influence in North America, although at the time of writing no lodge has been established.

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Excerpt from Thomas Karlsson, *Kabbala, kliffot och den goetiska magin* (2004)

Translation from Swedish: Tommie Eriksson

The Fall of Lucifer

On the original Tree of Life Yesod, the astral abode of man, is an exact reflection of the highest plane, Kether. Here man is an exact image of God.[20] Perhaps this is why Lucifer and the angels around him, Samyaza, Azazel and the sons of heaven, began to desire man (The Book of Enoch and Genesis 6). Yesod is the plane of sexuality, but on the perfect Tree it appears in a sublimated and sleeping form. Lucifer-Daath, the original serpent, represents the divine force of creation that is able to carry out God's (the trinity of Kether, Chokmah and Binah) idea of creation. Lucifer-Daath sinks down to man's level and awakens the power of creation and the sexual energy in man. Thus, man can reach knowledge which was previously only accessible to God and the angels. Daath-Knowledge is the fruit that man consumes in the myth of paradise.

The descent of the fallen angels down to the plane of man and their sexual union with man was a new and forbidden union between the planes. Lucifer, who had previously acted as the guardian and mediator between the divine and the levels below, left his position and united the higher levels with the lower. The astral level of man, Yesod, had been the lowest and final part of creation on the perfect Tree of Life. Mankind was then fertilized by the seed of the angels and instead of being merely a creation, mankind became creator when they gave birth to the Nephilim, the giants that are described in Genesis 6, and that are the progeny from the unity between men and angels. The perfect closed system of the original Tree of Life was broken.

After having eaten of the fruits of knowledge, the divine spark is awakened in man. The powers of God and Heaven feel threatened [. . .]

God banishes man from the Garden of Eden and forces him to cultivate the soil from which Adam had arisen. Cherubs holding flaming swords guard the path to the Tree of Life to prevent man from eating of it. Now the Fall has

occurred, and the degraded Tree of Life is constructed. An Abyss is created between the divine level and the worlds below. Man is thrown out of his astral garden down to the plane of matter. The Sephirah Malkuth is created. Lucifer-Daath loses his place closest to the throne of God (the supernatural triangle) and is thrown down in the Abyss. The Abyss is inside and beyond Malkuth. Daath becomes the invisible eleventh “non-sephirah.”

After the opening of the Abyss, the supernal triangle creates a sphere isolated from the rest of the Tree. In the middle of the supernal triad, God’s all-seeing eye is revealed; a symbol that can be recognized from old church paintings and masonic seals. This symbol represents God’s totalitarian power and the isolation of his authority in relation to the lower levels. The adepts of the light worship and praise this power. They submit themselves to God, Yahweh, and attempt to live in accordance with his laws and decrees. For Jewish Qabalists it means trying to live according to the Mosaic laws. For Christian Qabalists it is about following Jesus and placing their faith in him. Qabalistically, the crucifixion of Jesus symbolizes how, through his death, he creates a bridge over the Abyss and thus re-unites God and man. The Qabalistic goal is to appease Yahweh and through this restore the original harmonic order on the Tree of Life. The goal is to return to the childlike state of the Garden of Eden. For the monotheistic Qabalistic adepts of the light, a Messiah is needed to create a bridge over the Abyss. Tiphareth has that role since the higher, Black Sun, Daath, has been thrown into the Abyss. After the Fall, Tiphareth becomes the central sun on the Tree of Life. Both the Messiah and the dragon slayer, Michael, are associated with Tiphareth. It is through Tiphareth that the Abyss can be crossed.

The adepts of the Left Hand Path walk another and more difficult path. It is a path that is hard and Draconian, but which has the greatest goal: that of becoming a god. Instead of repairing the damage of the Fall, the dark adept glorifies the Fall and allows the destruction to be fulfilled. The dark adept crushes the old to let something new arise in its place. The Left Hand Path leads away from the Tree of Life and further into the Tree of Knowledge. The different Qliphoth can be viewed as fruits on the Tree of Knowledge. When man has eaten the fruits of knowledge God prevents him from eating from the Tree of Life. The adepts of light are hoping to be resurrected after death in heaven or in a new paradise. The dark adepts are seeking to access the fruits of a new Tree of Life through the Tree of Knowledge. This strife is the alchemical search of the Elixir Vitae and the Stone of the Wise. The work of

the Philosopher's Stone is the alchemical process of creating an original Tree of Life that resembles and represents the perfect diamond. By fulfilling the path that begun when the fruits of knowledge were consumed man can now reap the fruits of life.

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[1] This is a reference that points to an influence from the Typhonian Order of Kenneth Grant. Kennet Granholm, *Dark Enligtenment* (Leiden: Brill Publications, 2014) p. 71. *Embracing the Dark* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi University Press, 2005) p. 163. There are slight variations in the story as one mentions contact with an individual and one with a small group. For a discussion of Dragon Rouge and Yezidism, see Per Faxneld, "Moskébränder och förtryck av ädla påfågelsdyrkare: Islamreception bland några typer av svenska esoteriker," *DIN: tidsskrift for religion og kultur*, no. 2 (2017) pp. 109–113.

[2] Granholm, *Dark Enligtenment*, p. 71. Thomas Karlsson, *Bland mystiker och magiker i förorten* (Sunbyberg: Oroborus, 2012).

[3] Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment*, p. 71

[4] Who the man was is contested. In Granholm's description he is referred to as a Sufi, but in other sources he is identified as a street magician. Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment*, p. 71; Granholm, *Embracing the Dark*, p. 163.

[5] Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment*, p. 71. Here Granholm alludes to another group of predecessors sometimes mentioned in the order's historiography.

[6] Fredrik Gregorius, *Modern Asatro* (Lund: Lund University Press, 2008).

[7] See Michael Aquino, *Temple of Set*, vol. 1 (San Francisco: self-published, 2014) for further information on Barret. Barret was later removed from his office due to, among other things, his highly autocratic approach, and his leadership is generally regarded by the Temple of Set to have been a disaster, which also led to radical structural changes within the organization to prevent a similar development recurring. Barret's influence on Dragon Rouge seems to have been based mostly on the teachings he developed after his time in the Temple of Set, teachings that were introduced into Dragon Rouge through an individual called "Varg." The latter was a friend of Karlsson's, who was instrumental in the formation of Dragon Rouge. He was also a personal student of Barret's. Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment*, pp. 88f.

[8] Granholm, *Dark Enligtenment*, p. 72.

[9] Granholm, *Dark Enligtenment*, p. 74.

[10] See Titus Hjelm, Henrik Bogdan, Aspbjorn Dyrendal, and Jesper Agaard Petersen, "Nordic Satanism and Satanism Scares: The Dark Side of the Secular Welfare State," *Social Compass* 56:4 (2009) p. 515.

[11] Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment*, p. 74.

[12] Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment*, p. 90.

[13] Karlsson, lecture at 2015.

[14] Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment*, p. 130.

[15] Crowley, *Magick Without Tears* (Scottsdale: New Falcon Publications, 1991).

[16] Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment*, p. 146.

[17] It could be argued, however, that the line separating these figures from Lilith (and the entire kabbalistic demonology that appears frequently in texts and practices related to Dragon Rouge) is not

always very clear. On Lilith and the concept of the demonic feminine in Dragon Rouge, see Per Faxneld, “Intuitive, Receptive, Dark: Negotiations of Femininity in the Contemporary Satanic and Left-Hand Path Milieu,” *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* 4:2 (2013) pp. 221–224.

[18] Ruben van Luijk, “Sex, Science and Liberty: The Resurrection of Satan in 19th Century (Counter) Culture,” in *The Devil’s Party*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aa. Petersen (2012). Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment*, p. 113.

[19] Even though the story of the Fall recounted here owes just as much to the story of the angels’ love for the daughters of men taken from the Book of Enoch as it owes to the narrative of Genesis.

[20] Thomas Karlsson, *Qabalah, Qliphoth and Goetic Magic* (Jacksonville, OR: Ajna, 2009) pp. 41–44.

19

Michael W. Ford (The Order of Phosphorus, etc.), *The Bible of the Adversary* (2007)

Olivia Cejvan

Michael W. Ford is an American proponent of the so-called Left-hand Path,[1] which he also, more specifically, refers to as "the Adversarial Current" and the "Luciferian Witchcraft Tradition."[2] Ford is the founder of the Order of Phosphorus (TOPH), as well as one of the leaders of Assembly of Light Bearers (ALB), formerly known as the Greater Church of Lucifer (TGCL).[3] Apart from *The Bible of the Adversary*, he has authored several other books in which he promotes his version of the Left-hand Path. Ford describes his Luciferian ideology as a religion and a faith, particularly in his recent writings.[4] The Greater Church of Lucifer places a specific emphasis on Lucifer, under his Greek name *Eospherous*. Ford acknowledges influential occult personalities such as Aleister Crowley (1875–1947, see separate chapter in the present volume), Austin Osman Spare (1886–1956), and Anton Szandor LaVey (1930–1997, see separate chapter in the present volume) as sources of inspiration,[5] but the contemporary Left-hand Path milieu constitutes his most immediate context.

The Adversary is the key deity in Ford's ideology. In this context the Adversary functions as an abstract overarching designation for several deities, often elaborated as a gender polarity with Lucifer/Samael as the male component and Lilith as the female component. Additionally, Cain is referred to as the child of Lucifer and Lilith, and collectively they constitute a trinity of father, mother, and child.

Ford's writings, as well as his organizations, have a pronounced eclectic approach, weaving together several religious tenets, such as Zoroastrian as well as Sumerian and Western Judeo-Christian esoteric elements. Ahriman,

Lucifer, and Lilith are frequently mentioned and described. The various deities found in Ford's writings have different origins, but they are all understood as aspects of the Adversary—the rebellious force standing in opposition to reigning structures and norms,[6] as well as an adversarial deity in opposition to Godheads.[7] As such, the Adversary might be called an antinomian principle. At the same time, Ford does not advocate opposition toward other religions, such as Christianity, as he regards Luciferianism to be above dualities.[8] Rather than rejecting the content and techniques of other spiritual systems, Ford's Luciferianism is inclusive, operating with both light and darkness. It is often repeated that a Luciferian should strive for balance.[9] Ford suggests using the Hellenistic spirit Agathodaimon as "Deific Mask"[10] for the individual practitioner, even though its symbolic opposite would be the "evil spirit" Kakadaimon.[11] Here it becomes clear that Ford also enthusiastically adopts deities or principles that do not have a clear adversarial function in their original context. Ford expresses a holistic view, both in his characterization of the Adversary and in his delineation of magic,[12] but while "magick is for all ends and means," the ultimate goal of it, according to his Luciferian view, is unambiguously stated as the self-deification of the individual.[13] Ford characterizes the Luciferian as an individual who balances the material and spiritual as well as darkness and light, good and evil.[14]

Perhaps as a consequence of his eclectic approach, Ford offers differing elaborations on the characteristics of the Adversary and ultimately leaves it up to the individual Luciferian to interpret it and use it.[15] On the TOPH webpage, Ford's view is summarized as follows: "The Adversary is firstly a symbol or a 'Deific Mask' of numerous yet unique manifestations; representing energies inherent in both nature and within the individual."[16] There are frequent references to the Adversary and its constituent deities as internal, something residing within the individual psyche, but Ford points out that "There are many types of Luciferians; some are Theistic, believing deeply in the spirit of the Adversary. Some are Atheists, believing in the symbol of Lucifer as a self-transformation symbol."[17]

In Ford's own words, the Left-hand Path is defined as "The Antinomian (against the current, natural order) path which leads through self-deification (godhood)."[18] The goal of self-deification and the notion of antinomianism

are central to the scholarly definition of the Left-hand Path offered by the scholar of religion Kennet Granholm. He identifies the inclusion of a trans-cultural array of "dark" deities as a trend within contemporary Left-hand Path milieu.[19] Similarly, Ford's "Deific Masks" of the Adversary are collected from a wide variety of religious traditions. This comparative tendency among Left-hand Path groups has become increasingly common since the 1990s, with the figure of Satan appearing more frequently as a trans-cultural deity in various Satanic and/or Left-hand Path–oriented groups and ideologies. It is also reminiscent of the older trans-cultural eclecticism and syntheses of esoteric orders such as the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.[20]

The Bible of the Adversary (2007)

Origin

As the title suggests, *The Bible of the Adversary* is a key text in Ford's Luciferian ideology. The centrality and intention of the book are further emphasized by Ford in the introduction: "I felt a surge, a fire, a calling, a purpose greater than anything I have ever done. My goal was simple yet daunting: define the Luciferian Faith" where "various Satanic ideas may now be brought to one."[21]

The Bible of the Adversary consists of five parts: The Book of Andar, The Book of Akoman, The Book of Taromat, The Book of Zairic, and the Book of Azal'Ucel. These five books are each attributed to one of the five elements, which in turn correspond with the five points of the pentagram. The cover of *The Bible of the Adversary* is decorated with an inverted pentagram with a goat's head, reminiscent of the cover of Anton Szandor LaVey's *The Satanic Bible* (1969), which has arguably remained the most influential book on Satanism since its publication.[22] The title *The Bible of the Adversary* as well as its elemental structure are other obvious parallels to LaVey's *The Satanic Bible*, but given Ford's own confirmation of LaVey as a source of inspiration, the resemblances are hardly surprising.

The Bible of the Adversary encompasses a wide variety of text genres, ranging from manifestos, essays, and poetry to ritual instructions, as well as illustrations of symbols and deities. The first edition of *The Bible of the Adversary* was published in 2007,[23] by Ford's Houston-based publishing

company, *Succubus Productions*, via the print-on-demand site Lulu.

Content

The text reproduced here is an excerpt from *The Bible of the Adversary*, located in the section called *the Book of Taromat*, attributed to the element Earth. Ford follows the common occult understanding of Earth as connected to manifestation and foundation.[24] Ritual, then, is a way to manifest the individual will of the practitioner, a goal reflected in Lucifer as the very epitome of self-realization. Ahriman (the principle of Darkness in Zoroastrianism) is connected with the embodiment and practice of infernal principles. The purpose of the rituals is also to mold a Luciferian habitus, in Ford's words to "align ourselves to the Luciferian mind itself"[25] and to become "a manifestation of the Adversary."[26] The ultimate goal of ritual work is self-deification, but it can also be used for whatever goal the individual practitioner might have in mind. The practitioner is encouraged to cultivate and wield his or her will toward individual goals, which is connected to material as well as spiritual work, from the physical artifacts adorning the altar to various forms of visualization.

Some of the ritual descriptions in *the Book of Taromat* have a pedagogic function as a form of training. Ahrimanic yoga, for example, aims to exercise and develop the practitioner's concentration and will,[27] which is a prerequisite to successfully practicing magic. Ritual enactment is essentially understood as a practice of magic, which according to Ford is a technique of causing change in accordance with will,[28] a definition very close to Aleister Crowley's.[29] Ford underscores individual creativity and expression in ritual practice: "It is not about system, it is about results."[30] Ritual practice is recommended but not prescribed as necessary.[31]As such, the instructions are merely suggestions, which the practitioner may use according to his or her will. As is common to esotericism in general, ritual is both formalized and creative.[32]

Prior to the ritual instructions of *the Book of Taromat*, Ford provides an introduction to the practice of magic and a list of key elements for Luciferian ritual magic, beginning with the Temple, a demarcated area that may be a physical space or, as Ford says, "perhaps even your mind,"[33] indicating that ritual may be conducted in visualized form only.[34]

Ford explains the use and symbolism of several ritual tools, ranging from the altar, where "the sorcerer projects their will upon the universe," to less significant, but still common, ritual items such as candles and incense. Ford prescribes that the altar should contain things that symbolize the intentions of the practitioner: "The altar and the inverted pentagram often represent the Mastery of the Earth. Thus the Altar belongs to the essence of Belial, fixed earth, foundation."[35] Incense is recommended as a tool to create ritual ambience and stimulate the imagination through the senses, as well as being a symbol of the "the Light of Lucifer."[36]

The frequent explanatory passages throughout *the Book of Taromat* suggest that Ford does not expect the reader to have any great amount of knowledge concerning ritual practice. Prior to giving the instructions for *The Lesser Encircling Rite of the Luciferian* and *Techniques and Steps of Building The Body of Light or Darkness*, Ford provides the reader with a distilled form of ritual structure, *A Simplified means of Ritual*. This text is as a suggestion for an overall ritual sequence in seven steps, wherein specific rituals can be placed:

1. Use the Bell to announce the beginning of the rite (if applies).
2. Perform the Casting the Circle of the Dragon ritual or banishing rite.
3. A ritual from the Luciferian Magick, Yatukih Sorcery or Therionic Sorcery category.
4. Drink from the chalice in acknowledgement of your will.
5. Utilize a Staota to strengthen your rite and to forget meaning therefore empowering the subconscious. Read LUCIFERIAN WITCHCRAFT and LIBER HVHI for further details.
6. If using a sigil, charge it or destroy it depending on your choice.
7. Close the ritual and leave the chamber.

As seen in this outline, the rituals are conceived as components in a larger sequence, which is common in occult ritual scripts, such as those of the Golden Dawn.[37] In fact, Ford even suggests that the unseasoned Luciferian should begin there: "The traditional Golden Dawn ritual 'Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram' has been meaningful, yet the Luciferian is not required to perform it. I do suggest becoming familiar with it and using it until your work has graduated to the more power intensive and dangerous 'Casting the Circle of the Dragon' ritual."[38] As the Golden Dawn is not considered to be a Left-hand Path system, sometimes even the opposite,[39] Ford's willingness to recommend one of its most famous rituals might be taken as proof of his eclectic approach.

The figuration of the Adversary in the ritual scripts of the Book of Taromat

consists of several deities, most prominently Lucifer and Ahriman as well as Lilith as a female counterpart. Lucifer is connected with self-realization and ascension,[40] Ahriman with the body, instincts, and desire.[41] Somewhat dichotomous, they represent specific types of consciousness and magic[42] as well as being different aspects of the Adversary, congruent with its function as a unifying principle throughout Ford's works.

The notion of ascending is common in conjunction with Ford's elaborations on Lucifer, where it is often tied to knowledge and the self-deification of the individual. Ahriman is connected with earth, the carnal, bestial, and material. He is not, as Lucifer, associated with ascension and light and could be interpreted as something of an opposite. In a broader sense, all these traits are common to the positive interpretations of Satan that have flourished since the romantics.[43]

In these ritual scripts, the Adversary emerges with many infernal names and attributes, but also as a force that ultimately transcends dualities. The end of *Announcing Spirit Heritage* read: "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds / I shall also reside in the World of Darkness / [. . .] To be As Above and So Below." Similarly, *The Luciferian Immolation Rite* concludes: "I shall rise up as a spirit of Light/An angel of darkness when I dream."[44]

Genre and Audience

The didactic context of *the Book of Taromat*, wherein the ritual scripts are located, suggests that the intended audience is new to Luciferian ritual practice. Prior knowledge is not necessary, and pedagogic effort is made in the instructions and explanations. For instance, Ford explains core concepts of occultism, such as the astral body, in an introductory manner.[45]

The Lesser Encircling Rite of the Luciferian and *Techniques* and *Steps of Building The Body of Light or Darkness* are ritual instruction texts with the purpose of being performed. In other words, they are scripts for ritual performance.[46] Ritual scripts have long history within esotericism, and, as the historian of religions Henrik Bogdan has demonstrated (2007), modern Western rituals of initiation typically have their historical roots in Freemasonry. According to Bogdan, the reception of masonic ritual scripts (most notably in the *Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn*) resulted in a rather characteristic genre of magical ritual scripts where the masonic material was re-interpreted and re-enacted in new contexts. This kind of reception should

not be understood as an unbroken continuity of ritual practice in the course of history, but a rather disjointed and socially contingent transmission of occult discourse.[47]

Considering the great influence the *Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn* exerted on subsequent occult movements of the twentieth century and onward,[48] it is not surprising to find traces of it in Ford's texts. On this point, the resemblance particularly between Ford's *The Lesser Encircling Rite of the Luciferian* and Golden Dawn's *The Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram* is particularly clear. Crucially, however, the infernal counterparts in the former have replaced the names of the divinities in the latter.[49] Ford's ritual scripts also resemble ritual scripts from the wider Left-hand Path milieu, from those found in LaVey's *Satanic Bible* to those of Dragon Rouge (see separate chapter in the present volume).

Reception and Influence

Considering the comparatively recent publication of Ford's text, it is difficult to determine its reception and influence. Scholar of religion Fredrik Gregorius (2013) suggests that Ford's writings exert ideological influence due to the accessibility and wide distribution of his books. Another factor that indicates Ford's possibly growing influence is his co-establishing of the Greater Church of Lucifer in Houston, Texas. This created some local controversy and media attention,[50] which may well have added to his reputation.

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Excerpts from Michael W. Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary* (2007)

The Lesser Encircling Rite of the Luciferian

Knowing the essence of Magick is to understand that power is found within the force of Will and Spirit.[51] The Luciferian utilizes a circle during both invocation and evocation, the circle is said to be dualistic in nature; the dualism in reference is the balance. The circle is used as a point of clarity and focus for the magickian, to announce the Will of the individual. The essence of a banishing ritual from a Luciferian perspective is not to keep anything out, but to attain the highest light as Lucifer.

The traditional Golden Dawn ritual "Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram" has been meaningful, yet the Luciferian is not required to perform it. I do suggest becoming familiar with it and using it until your work has graduated to the more power intensive and dangerous "Casting the Circle of the Dragon" ritual. The names utilized in this banishing ritual are the names of the Adversary and the powers attuned in this current.

Part I. The Directions of Power

1. Face any preferred direction. Visualize a bright white sphere above the head and vibrate: "YALTABAOTH!"
2. Bring down the beam of fiery light to the genitals and vibrate: "AESHMA—TAROMATI!"
3. Up to the middle of the chest, and across to the right shoulder. Vibrate: "DO—MAR16!"
4. To left shoulder, vibrate: "DEHAK!"
5. Clasp hands at the chest, visualizing a bright red reverse pentagram upon the breast vibrate: "ANDAR!"
6. Turn to the direction of the West, visualize a blue flame and a great black fire in the center "LEVIATHAN!"
7. Turn to the South, visualize a Serpent-Angel and vibrate, "SAMAEL!"
8. Turn to the East, visualize a bright, shining Angel and vibrate, "LUCIFER!"
9. Turn to the North, draw and inverse Pentagram and vibrate, "LILITH!"
10. Return to centre [*sic*] of temple, with eyes closed you visualize the Daemons you have invoked, and the elemental energy's flowing in from each quarter. Then say, "Encircled around me is the fire and power of Leviathan and the essence of Lilith and Samael. I announce my intent as God on earth and to ascend the heights of Heaven and illuminate through the depths of Hell. As above, so Below."

Part II. Announcing Spirit Heritage

I who have fallen from heaven
Am reborn in the flesh, let me awake anew
O Lucifer, Azal'ucel My Spirit

Ascending in Blinding Fire
I was cast down to the ground,
My spirit which once ruled among nations!
I say now in my heart and mind
I will ascend into heaven,
Knowing I am the Only God that is
I will exalt my throne;
I will sit upon the mount of meeting,
In the uttermost parts of the north;
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds
I shall also reside in the World of Darkness
I Will nourish myself in the nether-world,
To be As Above and So Below

Part III. Develop the Body of Light

It is the duty of the Luciferian to build his or her body in the visualized or astral body of the Angel of Lawlessness, whose light is brighter than any. Within the human body there is another body of slightly larger size, made of matter which is that of Ahriman, yet is a subtle material called the Astral Body. Here is the first part of the essence of the Yatukih or Luciferian, that our word is Druj and this is the Word of the Lie, or the Serpent. There is no truth, for everything found holds a contradiction. When one dies, the physical body ceases to exist in life, yet the spirit exists still; this is the True Will made manifest, the essence of Lucifer, the Power of the Air. This is duality in speaking. The Body of Light or Astral Body is essential in the attainment of the immortality of this matter, the spirit. The spirit of the Magickian who has developed this body is able to ascend upward, into darkness and perceive worlds not seen by the visible eye.

The intimate knowledge of the Body of Light is understood by one who is able to build it, develop it and consider it as real to you as your physical body. By developing the Body of Light or Shadow you are able to understand your drives, desires and learn to listen to your instincts in a balanced perspective.

Words, commands and how you use perspective is essential in this act just as any other. If you start by announcing yourself in strength, then you will become strong. If you announce yourself as unsure, you will be weak and become prey for strong astral powers17.

The Luciferian may build and strengthen the Astral Body by utilizing the aspects of Yoga or body control. This type of control is so important, it can

shield you from attacks, it allows spiritual communication, in judging character and all other aspects.

Techniques and Steps of Building the Body of Light or Darkness

In a quite area, focus on meditating and stilling the body from the feet to your head. You will want to start the working with the Lesser Encircling Rite of the Luciferian, then to the LUCIFERIAN IMMOLATION RITE which announces the astral beauty and strength of the mind. The Luciferian may say this to his or herself; this working will affirm the intent of the Will, which will firstly command the ascension of the spirit.

Luciferian Immolation Rite

You may wish to visualize your form before you, or THE SUN tarot card from THE LUCIFERIAN TAROT, if female or adopting the feminine Lilith spirit, use the youthful, fiery female image of THE QUEEN OF WANDS from THE LUCIFERIAN TAROT.

I am the Spirit of Timeless Being
The Angel of Lawlessness,
I announce my own desire to become flesh
My spirit forms in front of me
It is my Will to form it to my desire.
I am adorned in every precious stone Carnelian, Chrysolite, and Amethyst
I am adorned in Beryl, Lapis Lazuli and Jasper
I am adorned in the Sapphire, Turquoise and Emerald and Gold which reflects my spiritual power I am the Cherub which becomes a Dragon of Darkness, I AM THE CONSUMING ENERGY My wings are twelve and outstretched
I cast shadow on my creations
Give nourishment and gain power from darkness
I reside above the Heights of the stars
I shall rise up as a spirit of Light
An angel of darkness when I dream
So it shall be.

Upon completing this chant, take the following steps.

1. Closing your eyes, lying down or standing up visualize a body or light before you. It is slightly larger than your material body, you may shape it according to your desire. The Luciferian Spirit may take form of what it wishes—remember Yaltabaoth, who takes whatever form he wishes to

command his Will. A God or Goddess must be this bold.

2. Once you are out of that physical body, you may use the Astral Eyes to see. You may rise upward.
3. Journey where you wish, remember name and perspective matter as to the experience you will have. Keep a journal and record your results.

Casting the Circle of the Dragon

Banishing rituals have long issued forth a concept of control and focus in magickal practice. The Luciferian understands that to grow stronger, he or she must be willing to utilize methods to focus and concentrate the mind. To do this we practice Ahrimanic Yoga, breathing and mind control workings which align ourselves to the Luciferian mind itself.

This is a preparation ritual to focus the mind and establish the concept of working with the strength of self. The circle is not to keep anything out, rather it is to announce mastery of your environment and the rites which you will undertake. This rite is based on Qlippothic correspondences and a balanced approach to the Daemonic feminine and masculine. During invocation, it is essential to become charged and inspired by the rate in which you are breathing and reciting. Allow the words to roll from your tongue, the point is to open your mind to gnosis which can provide a powerful magickal experience.

You may visualize a circle area when invoking, use your imagination to see what you are calling forth, let the Patron Daemons of the Circle be seen by he or she who has commanded it so! Let these energies take the form of what you desire within.

Casting the Circle of the Dragon

I invoke thee, Adversarial powers of darkness
Who hold the inner Light of Life and Strength
I open now the Gates of Hell
Zazas . . . Zazas . . .Nasatanada . . .Zazas

[Face the West]
Leviathan, Crooked Serpent of the Abyss, patron Daemon of eternal life, coil around me and gather forth the powers of my creation!

[Face the South-West]
O bride of Asmodai, fire illuminated Goddess, Lilith the Younger, arise and inspire!

[Face the South]
Satan, Adversary, Fire illuminated spirit of darkness and light, whose touch illuminates clay, who is the ancient serpent, Draco Nequissime, who is Ahriman, rise up in me father!

[Face the South-East]
Elder Mother of the Air and the Night, Lilith the ancient, bride of Samael, arise and illuminate my spirit.

[Face the East]
Lucifer, who is the Archon of Light, God of the Spirit, Awaken through me, illuminate and empower that I might guide the powers of darkness.

[Face the North-East]
Aggereth, Daughter of Machaloth, coil your serpents about my spirit, Arise with me!

[Face the North]
Belial, Lawless Spirit of the Beast, Archon of the Abyss, arise unto me as I pronounce the Mastery of the Earth!

[Face the North-West]
Abaddon, the unnamable one,
arise from the depths of the bottomless pit, strike down my enemies and be as guardian of this circle.

[Face again the South]
Samael, Angel of Darkness and the Bringer of Life and Fire, hearken unto me ancient dragon!

[Face again the North]
Asmodai, who is of Cain the first of Witch Blood, hearken and empower me with the power of ArchDaemons.
Rise from the abyss and envenom my workings!
You may now utilize the number of names for your workings, or move directly into a ritual of Yatukih, Therionick or Luciferian practice.

[Face the North-West]
Abaddon, the unnamable one,
arise from the depths of the bottomless pit, strike down my enemies and be as guardian of this circle.

[Face again the South]
Samael, Angel of Darkness and the Bringer of Life and Fire, hearken unto me ancient dragon!

[Face again the North]
Asmodai, who is of Cain the first of Witch Blood, hearken and empower me with the power of Arch Daemons.
Rise from the abyss and envenom my workings!

You may now utilize the number of names for your workings, or move directly into a ritual of Yatukih, Therionick or Luciferian practice.

[1] According to Ford's presentation on his Facebook page (2018), he has been active in the Left-hand Path milieu for more than sixteen years. https://www.facebook.com/LuciferianMichaelWFord/info?tab=page_info.

[2] Michael W. Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary* (Houston, TX: Succubus Productions, 2008 [2007]). *Luciferian Witchcraft* (Houston, TX: Succubus Productions, 2009 [2005]).

[3] Assembly of Light Bearers, Official website, http://assemblyoflightbearers.org (accessed September 28, 2018).

[4] Michael W. Ford, *Wisdom of Eosphoros: the Philosophy of Luciferianism* (Houston, TX: Succubus Productions, 2015).

[5] Ford, *Luciferian Witchcraft*, pp. 9–10.

[6] In Ford's own words "The Adversary is a trans-cultural archetype which has existed long before Christianity began. Satan is merely a title meaning 'Adversary' or 'Opposer." The Luciferian relates these definitions as the empowering rebel, the spirit which stands against a slave creating religion no matter which it is." Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 10.

[7] Ford states that: "The Adversary for the Luciferian is a symbol of the Self, if you were attuned to Christian symbolism this would be the Antichrist, the antithesis of what Christ would represent." Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 67.

[8] Ford, *Wisdom of Eosphoros*, pp. 31, 63, 73.

[9] For example, Ford states that: "An initiated or insightful mind could see that challenge and adversity is actually beneficial for our development. We grow stronger from challenges; overcoming obstacles breeds resilience and resounding individual strength. Luciferians recognize the symbolism of the Adversary in all of its forms as a beneficial, balanced motivational force within the self." Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 43.

[10] Ford explains the concept as follows: "The Gods and Goddesses of the Luciferian Path are collected from a multicultural perspective; they are what I refer to as Deific Masks, energies or spirits collected into forms in which we apply personality or image to." Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 33.

[11] Ford, *Wisdom of Eosphoros*, pp. 83–84.

[12] "There is no such thing as 'White' Magick—there is only Black as it is the magick of Transformation, black meaning wisdom from the Arabic root. When you hear 'black' magick you think of simply destructive magick, yet the fact is this magick is for all ends and means." Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 153.

[13] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 185. Self-deification is another characteristic of the Left-hand Path according to Granholm. Kennet Granholm, "Embracing Others than Satan: The Multiple Princes of Darkness in the Left Hand Path Milieu," in *Contemporary Religious Satanism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Jesper Aagaard Petersen (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

[14] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, pp. 8, 172, 274, 324.

[15] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 87.

[16] http://theorderofphosphorus.com/toph/.

[17] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 10.

[18] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 323.

[19] Granholm has defined Left-hand Path as a contemporary esoteric movement consisting of five main components: individualism, human as totality, life in the here-and-now, self-deification, and antinomianism. According to Granholm, Left-hand Path ideology aims at transcending dualism, such as

good and evil and black and white magic. Granholm, “Embracing others than Satan,” pp. 87–93, 97.

[20] Chris Mathews, *Modern Satanism: Anatomy of a Radical Subculture* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2009) p. 105.

[21] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 6.

[22] Eugene V. Gallagher, “Sources, Sects, and Scripture: The Book of Satan in The Satanic Bible,” in *The Devil’s Party: Satanism in Modernity*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). James R. Lewis, “Infernal Legitimacy,” in *Contemporary Religious Satanism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Jesper Aagaard Petersen (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

[23] A second edition was published in 2008. The format is a paperback and E-book edition, consisting of 538 pages with both text and illustrations.

[24] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 154.

[25] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 181.

[26] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 174.

[27] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 181.

[28] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 10.

[29] ”MAGICK is the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will.” Aleister Crowley, *Magick: Book 4 Parts I–IV* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1997 [1994]) p. 126.

[30] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p 145.

[31] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 153.

[32] Tanya M. Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch’s Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989) pp. 72–73. Egil Asprem, “Contemporary Ritual Magic,” in *The Occult World*, ed. Christopher Partridge (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014).

[33] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 153–154.

[34] In fact, Ford states this quite unambiguously. Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 153.

[35] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 154.

[36] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 158.

[37] For example see Israel Regardie, *The Golden Dawn: The Original Account of the Teachings, Rites & Ceremonies of the Hermetic Order* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1989) and Crowley, *Magick: Book 4 Parts I–IV*.

[38] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 176.

[39] Asprem, “Contemporary Ritual Magic,” p. 392.

[40] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, pp. 12–14, 82.

[41] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 64.

[42] Ford distinguishes between three types of magic: Luciferian Magick, connected with ascension; Yatukih Sorcery, which deals with Ahrimanic atavisms, and Therionic Sorcery, which is bestial and atavistic, rather similar to Yatukih Sorcery. Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 173.

[43] Ruben van Luijk has summarized the positive figurations of Satan in three themes, *sex*, *science* and *liberty*: “Sex (linking him with earth, nature, and ‘the flesh’), Science (Satan as symbol of scientific progress and ‘modern’ critical thought), and (political and individual) Liberty.” Ruben van Luijk, “Sex, Science, and Liberty: The Resurrection of Satan in Nineteenth-Century (Counter) Culture,” in *The Devil’s Party: Satanism in Modernity*, ed. Per Faxneld and Jesper Aagaard Petersen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[44] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 180.

[45] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 178.

[46] Ritual studies professor Ronald Grimes describes ritual scripts in analogy to theatrical scripts, sitting "behind a performance." Ronald Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014) p. 278. Anthropologist Tanya Luhrmann also stresses the similarity between esoteric rituals and theatrical performance, see Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch's craft*.

[47] Asprem, "Contemporary Ritual Magic."

[48] Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Western Esotericism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013) pp. 39–40.

[49] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, p. 176.

[50] Leif Reigstad, "In Lucifer's Name: Michael Ford's Invented Religion Comes to Old Town Spring," *Houston Press*, November 10, 2015, https://www.houstonchronicle.com/lifestyle/houston-belief/article/Exorcised-Luciferian-church-looks-to-start-anew-11093429.php (accessed September 28, 2018) and Keri Blakinger. "Exorcised: Luciferian Church Looks to Start Anew after Harassment," *Houston Chronicle*, April 23, 2017, https://www.houstonchronicle.com/lifestyle/houston-belief/article/Exorcised-Luciferian-church-looks-to-start-anew-11093429.php (accessed September 28, 2018).

[51] Ford, *The Bible of the Adversary*, 176–183.

20

Lucien Greaves (The Satanic Temple), "Church of Satan vs. Satanic Temple" (2017)

Fredrik Gregorius and Manon Hedenborg White

Despite its relative youth as an organization, much indicates that The Satanic Temple (TST) has emerged as one of the most important movements in the history of Satanism. In a recent interview, Lucien Greaves (b. circa 1976)—national spokesperson for TST in the United States—claimed that the organization has approximately 50,000 members.[1] However, it must be stressed that membership is free and attainable through online application, and there is reason to believe the number of active members is much smaller.[2] Even so, TST appears numerically to be the largest Satanic organization in history. Compared to other forms of Satanism, TST has also appealed to a new demographic. While Satanism has historically been male-dominated, TST has seemingly attracted more women (though it is difficult to ascertain the gender ratio among members decisively).[3] Through its activist presence and emphasis on social justice and feminism, TST has influenced the US political landscape and debate to a higher degree than earlier strands of Satanism. This has earned the organization respect from mainstream media and surrounding society, but also garnered controversy.

TST emerged around 2012–2013, from the collaboration between a filmmaker under the alias Malcolm Jarry (b. unknown) and former Harvard student Doug Mesner, later to be known under the *nom de guerre* of Lucien Greaves. The two men teamed up with the aim of creating an organization that fulfilled the formal requirements of former US president George W. Bush's White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, while subverting and challenging the primarily Christian outreach initiatives mostly supported by the latter.[4] In January 2013, TST appeared on the public scene

by hosting a mock rally to endorse Florida governor Rick Scott, who had supported new legislation allowing prayer in public schools.

TST's endorsement of Scott was, clearly, satirical, referencing the new bill as providing "promotional opportunities for the dark master," that is, Satan.[5] Accompanied by a group of people, Mesner held a sign supporting Scott, reading: "Hail Satan! Hail Rick Scott!"[6] During this time, Mesner started using the pseudonym Lucien Greaves, previously a moniker used by several people in TST's public communication.[7]

TST's entrance into the media limelight was characterized by uncertainty as to whether the organization was serious or intended as a practical joke. For example, *The Miami Herald* claimed the Florida rally was part of a mockumentary centering on a fictional Satanic organization. Although Greaves has continually stated that Satanism is a serious matter, he acknowledges the satirical aspects of the organization.[8] During the rally, an actor was used as a spokesperson for TST, and a website as well as statements promoting a humorous theology, later to be discarded, were issued around the same time.[9]

Later in 2013, TST staged two additional campaigns that attracted media attention. Firstly, TST joined the "Adopt-a-Highway" program, where an organization pledges to keep a highway section free from litter in exchange for having its name signposted adjacent to it. Secondly, and more boldly, Greaves performed a so-called Pink Mass over the grave of Catherine Johnston, mother of late Westboro Baptist Church founder Fred Phelps (1929–2014).[10] The Westboro Baptist Church is well known for its extreme anti-LGBTQ views—its most famous slogan being "God Hates Fags." The purpose of the Pink Mass was to "convert" Johnston to eternal homosexuality, in a playful parody of the Latter-Day Saints' tradition of proxy baptisms for deceased relatives. Greaves was arrested on a misdemeanor charge. TST also created a mock website in the church's name.[11]

In 2014, TST launched its most famous campaign thus far, aimed at erecting a statue of the goat-deity Baphomet—popularized by French socialist and occultist Eliphas Lévi (1810–1875) and used by Anton LaVey (1930–1997) for the emblem of the Church of Satan[12]—outside of the Oklahoma state Capitol. The campaign was a response to the state of Oklahoma approving a monument to the Ten Commandments at the same

location, which TST held to be a violation of constitutional secularism. After a successful crowdfunding campaign, the Baphomet statue was completed in 2015, though the state elected to remove the biblical monument rather than accept its Satanic companion. The Baphomet statue was instead installed in TST's gallery in Salem, Massachusetts.[13]

As interest in TST grew, local chapters began to form. The year 2014 also witnessed the establishment of the first official local chapter, which opened in Detroit under the leadership of Jex Blackmore (b. 1986). Blackmore served briefly as national spokesperson for TST, contributing to a stronger focus on feminism and gender issues on the part of the organization. She resigned in 2018 following an artistic performance that was perceived as encouraging violence toward erstwhile US president Donald J. Trump.[14] This led to a schism within TST (see below).

TST has received much media attention for its Baphomet initiative as well as the campaign "After School Satan," launched in response to the Christian Evangelical "Good News Clubs" operating post-curricular activities in public schools.[15] Simultaneously, TST has maintained other campaigns that are less flamboyant but may potentially have a greater impact on the US religious and social landscape. From around 2014, TST has emphasized reproductive rights as a central aspect of its agenda, launching several initiatives to defend abortion rights and invoking religious freedom legislation against the Christian-dominated political leadership in conservative US states.[16] In a long-running legal campaign, TST has sued states for requiring women seeking abortion to undergo a mandatory waiting period and receive pro-life reading material.[17] TST has contested these restrictions on the grounds of religious freedom, stating that the regulations violate TST's religious belief in bodily autonomy as established in its foundational "Seven Tenets" (see below). TST has also confronted pro-life manifestations outside Planned Parenthood clinics.[18]

Although TST is not affiliated with any political party (a prerequisite for its status as a religious non-profit), the public initiatives of the organization have repeatedly brought it into conflict with the Religious Right. According to Greaves, TST gained thousands of new members in the wake of the 2016 election of Trump as US president. Following the election, TST vowed to combat perceived theocratic tendencies in Trump's government as well as the latter's self-professed wish to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court

ruling establishing the right to abortion as protected by the right to privacy. TST also described Trump's vice president Mike Pence as "a disturbed, superstitious, gynophobic theocratic who would be better suited to a public park milk crate-podium ministry."[19] In spite of being politically independent, TST has thus implicitly positioned itself in opposition to the Trump presidency.

TST spokespersons have also aimed criticism toward Satanic organizations they perceive as patriarchal, with a particular emphasis on the Church of Satan. For instance, Jex Blackmore has critiqued both Christianity and earlier forms of Satanism for upholding a chauvinistic and patriarchal model of women's roles and capabilities, accusing modern Satanism of being tailored around a male, heterosexual gaze.[20]

In recent years, TST has continued to garner media attention while also handling a series of internal crises. The year 2018 witnessed a major schism within TST, partly related to Blackmore's resignation, which actualized critiques against centralization of authority within the organization. Greaves also elicited criticism for employing a lawyer that some members viewed as linked to the alt-right. The schism prompted the closing down of TST's Los Angeles chapter and, in Europe, the formation of a schismatic group, the Global Order of Satan, which independently worked on similar principles as TST.[21] The lasting impact of these tensions is yet to be determined—however, 2019 coincided with the acclaimed documentary *Hail Satan?* (directed by Penny Lane) chronicling the rise of TST, which further cemented the organization's impact and visibility. Despite its youth as an organization, TST has managed to become the most prominent public face of Satanism in mainstream media and political debate.

"Church of Satan vs. Satanic Temple" (2017)

Origin

Penned by Lucien Greaves, the source text reproduced herein, titled "Church of Satan vs. Satanic Temple," presents what Greaves perceives as the essential differences between TST and LaVey's Church of Satan. It is worth noting that the description of the Church of Satan is highly polemical, and not necessarily reflective of the latter organization's values or activities.

Constructing the Church of Satan as a sort of negative "other," contrasted with TST's own brand of Satanism, the text nonetheless serves as an illustrative example of TST's self-image and presentation vis-à-vis other forms of Satanism, shedding light on some of the boundary work that has occurred in the contemporary Satanic landscape.

Content

TST is a non-theistic organization that views Satan as a cultural and religious symbol of rebellion, freedom, and independence. In so doing, TST draws inspiration from older literary and philosophical sources, explicitly referring to writers such as John Milton (1608–1674), William Blake (1757–1827), Jules Michelet (1798–1874; see separate chapter in the present volume), and, especially, Anatole France (1844–1924). The latter's novel *La Révolte des anges* ("Revolt of the Angels," 1914) is, perhaps, the closest thing to a canonical text within TST. The above-mentioned Baphomet statue is adorned with quotes from Blake and Lord Byron (1788–1824), emphasizing the connection to the romantic tradition.[22] In interpreting Satan as a symbol of liberation from oppression, TST also echoes a selection of radical nineteenth-century socialists, perhaps most famously the anarchist and atheist writer Mikhail Bakunin (1814–1876), who praised Satan as the first rebel. This theme was continued in Saul Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals* (1971), where the author praises Lucifer as the first revolutionary.[23] This fact has been used by Evangelicals trying to associate left-wing politics with Satan.

In contrast to the Church of Satan, TST makes limited references to Satan as a symbol for earthly pleasure or egotism. Instead, Satan is presented as a Promethean character, fighting on behalf of the oppressed. As noted above, TST has emphasized the connection between Satanism and feminism, and anti-patriarchal references are numerous in the organization's public statements. For instance, a 2017 promotional flyer for TST Arizona proudly proclaims: "Christian guilt got you down? Tired of the strongholds of patriarchy? . . . Maybe it's time you try Satanism!" While decidedly tongue-in-cheek, the above quote illustrates how patriarchy is referred to as one of the primary enemies of Satanism.

While TST does not align itself with any political ideology, its written material, terminology, and symbols frequently reference leftist thought and activism: for instance, the word "comrade" is used to refer to other Satanists,

and some parts of TST employ a black and white American flag originally used by the Occupy Wall Street movement. TST has also rejected the social Darwinism characteristic of some of Anton LaVey's writings, instead emphasizing solidarity and care. This attitude is reflected in TST's ethical guidelines, called the "7 Fundamental Tenets," which emphasize, among other aspects, "compassion and empathy toward all creatures," the "struggle for justice," bodily autonomy, freedom of speech, adherence to scientific knowledge, and accountability for one's failures. In its struggle for reproductive rights, when arguing on the grounds of religious freedom that TST members should not be subjected to regulations aiming to restrict access to abortion, the organization has repeatedly invoked the third of these tenets, stating: "One's body is inviolable, subject to one's own will alone."[24]

Genre and Audience

The text is intended to delineate the central differences between TST and the Church of Satan, and is geared toward a readership that may have some prior knowledge about Satanism but that is outside the Satanic milieu and may confuse the two organizations. The text is used to clarify this and written in such a way that people with limited knowledge about Satanism can understand the argument.

Reception and Influence

In the North American and European contexts, TST is the most visible representation of Satanism since the establishment of the Church of Satan in 1966, as well as one of the primary focal points for media when addressing Satanism today. As TST's public rituals have garnered much attention, other Satanic groups—seeking publicity—have attempted similar stunts, though without TST's distinct social agenda.[25] Unsurprisingly, TST's successful courting of the public limelight—as well as its critique of earlier forms of modern Satanism—has brought the organization into tension with other Satanic groups. The Church of Satan, for instance, has been critical of TST, rejecting the idea of mixing politics and social activism with Satanism. While TST's lasting impact within the Satanic landscape is difficult to ascertain, it may nonetheless be tentatively observed that TST seems to have shifted the public image of Satanism to become more and more associated with progressive causes. As new groups are formed based on similar ideas, this

tendency may continue.

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Lucien Greaves, “Church of Satan vs. Satanic Temple” (2017)

In only six years, The Satanic Temple has become the primary religious Satanic organization in the world, with chapters internationally, and a number of high-profile public campaigns designed to preserve and advance secularism and individual liberties.[26] The rise of The Satanic Temple has been met with an increase in commentary regarding what Satanism is as media outlets struggle to grasp how this upstart religion has begun to shift

religious liberty debates with mere claims of equal access.

With unfortunate regularity, The Satanic Temple is confused with an earlier organization, the Church of Satan, founded by Anton Szandor LaVey in the 1960s, to the apparent chagrin of both. The Church of Satan expresses vehement opposition to the campaigns and activities of The Satanic Temple, asserting themselves as the only "true" arbiters of Satanism, while The Satanic Temple dismisses the Church of Satan as irrelevant and inactive.

On the surface, some differences between the two organizations are immediately apparent: the Church of Satan fashions itself the inheritor of LaVey's legacy, paradoxically claiming his philosophy of individualism a collective achievement for which they rest upon the laurels. Aside from an active Twitter feed, whereon the Church of Satan posts catchy memes and commentary upon popular culture references to Satan, the Church of Satan is otherwise inactive as an organization, arguing that as individualists, it is upon the individual merits and achievements of their membership that their collective reputation should be measured. The Satanic Temple, on the other hand is very active in public affairs. Unlike the Church of Satan, The Satanic Temple has a physical headquarters with weekly congregations in Salem, Massachusetts, and numerous regularly-congregating chapters throughout the world.

The Church of Satan dedicates a good deal of time offering disparaging commentary against The Satanic Temple's activities on the assertion that "true Satanism" is apolitical, and whether or not they agree with any of our positions, they object nonetheless to what they see as a misappropriation of Satanism. In doing so, they fail to delineate the clear philosophical differences between the two organizations, and many people are unaware that the beliefs of the two aren't merely interchangeable. Perhaps due to the popularity of The Satanic Temple, one is hard pressed to find the Church of Satan commenting on the philosophical schism between the organizations, instead opting to forward the notion that The Satanic Temple has merely stolen what they see as their brand, as well as their beliefs.

The following essay is a guide to understanding the philosophical differences between The Satanic Temple and the Church of Satan so as to give the reader a clear understanding of the "Satanic Reformation" instigated by The Satanic Temple's work. As this essay is only meant to illustrate the differences between the two organizations, it can not be said to be a full analysis of the beliefs of either.

The Satanic Temple

The Satanic Temple was founded in 2013 by me (Lucien Greaves) and Malcolm Jarry. It was as much the cause of a schism within Modern Satanism as it was the result of one. The Church of Satan's failure to manifest itself into a real-world relevant organization and its withdraw from hosting events or maintaining its "grottos" meant that Satanism had all but disappeared from the public consciousness and was hardly taken seriously at-large as a religious identification, rather than a pejorative attribution. From the beginning, The Satanic Temple offered a stark contrast to the Church of Satan's anti-altruistic philosophy of self interest, stating in our first tenet, "One should strive to act with compassion and empathy toward all creatures in accordance with reason."

Resolutely non-theistic, The Satanic Temple does not endorse supernatural (or "supernormal") explanations, a position also codified in the tenets which state, Beliefs should conform to one's best scientific understanding of the world. One should take care never to distort scientific facts to fit one's beliefs. Rituals in The Satanic Temple are creative and expressive—often event-specific—rather than rote and "magical." Our skepticism and demand for empirical proof upon which to measure truth claims can be most readily discerned in our GREY FACTION CAMPAIGN, where we challenge the perpetuation of pseudoscientific practices in the mental health profession and beyond.

Anti-authoritarian and democratic in principle, The Satanic Temple disregards Social Darwinism and engages directly in politically charged campaigns to fight back against theocratic impositions into politics. Making clear that we would never seek exclusive placement of our displays of religious expression on public grounds, we do however act as upholders of pluralism where religious displays have been allowed, reminding officials in the United States of their First Amendment responsibility to viewpoint neutrality by offering Satanic displays of our own. Similarly, where evangelicals have entered public schools to proselytize to children with Bible-based after school clubs, The Satanic Temple has offered science-based, critical thinking-developing AFTER SCHOOL SATAN CLUBS as an alternative.

The Satanic Temple Is Active in Real World Affairs

Contrary to LaVey's opposition to abortion, The Satanic Temple has FOUGHT BACK AGAINST reproductive rights restrictions with litigation in the name of Religious Liberty citing our "bodily autonomy tenet": One's body is inviolable, subject to one's own will alone. We also leverage this tenet to FIGHT BACK AGAINST CORPORAL PUNISHMENT in schools, and hope to use it in the future to support "Death With Dignity" claims within our membership.

Behind the spectacle of all these public facing campaigns, we also have a growing number of chapters internationally who congregate regularly, hold private and public events, and often engage directly with their communities in decidedly un-LaVeyan charitable works.

With such glaring differences, why is it that we often find former Church of Satan members joining The Satanic Temple, and sometimes find current Church of Satan members openly applauding our actions? Clearly, many, if not most, people come to LaVey through Satan, rather than to Satan through LaVey. Satan provides a certain cultural raw material that very rarely doesn't have an "intuitive" interpretation residing in the minds of anybody embedded in Western culture. To those who gravitate with an affinity toward the "eternal rebel," Satan appears as the antithesis of today's Evangelical Theocrats, regardless of the fact that the Church of Satan—like the metaphorical frog that fails to escape the slowly boiled water—now apparently finds its politics perfectly, though unwittingly, aligned with the American Theocratic Right. As previously mentioned, a significant portion of LaVey's fandom do not necessarily view LaVey's commentary upon the Laws of Nature as a vision for how the world ought to be, but rather as clear-eyed confrontation with the world as it is; a sober cold, hard look at the plain facts through which one can understand the brutal power dynamics at play around them, for better or for worse. To them, the overriding principle is skeptical inquiry and scientific scrutiny; seeing the world for what it is so as to better understand their place in it. But what happens when LaVey's understanding of Nature prove false?

Human Cooperation

Social Darwinism made no appeals to supernatural explanations, but it does appeal to a misguided reductionism, and as a social theory it is considered discredited. Not long after Social Darwinism had gained ascendency in the

American philosophical consciousness refutations of its fundamental claims regarding the "natural" competitive nature of all biological life began to erode its credibility among academics.

As early as 1901, Kroptkin's Mutual Aid challenged Social Darwinism's "nature red in tooth and claw" assertions with an exhaustive list of evidence for the importance of cooperation throughout the living world:

> Happily enough, competition is not the rule either in the animal world or in mankind. It is limited among animals to exceptional periods, and natural selection finds better fields for its activity. Better conditions are created by the elimination of competition by means of mutual aid and mutual support. . . .

Richard Hofstadter, in his book Social Darwinism in American Thought explains, "Kropotkin backed his thesis with an impressive amount of Happily, natural and historical lore, culled from a wide range of literature. From ants, bees, and beetles, through all of mammalia, Kropotkin found sociability and cooperation within the species-unit. Birds, even birds of prey, are sociable, and wolves hunt in packs. Rodents work in common, horses herd together, and most monkeys live in bands.

Hofstadter concludes in his analysis of Social Darwinist thought:

> There was nothing in Darwinism that inevitably made it an apology for competition or force [. . .] The Christian denial of Darwinian "realism" in social theory was no less natural, as a human reaction, than the harsh logic of the "scientific school." Darwinism had from the first this duel potentiality; intrinsically it was a neutral instrument, capable of supporting opposite ideologies.

As relieving as refutations against Social Darwinism may be to some, there is a certain brand of left hand path adherent who will hear in this a renunciation of individualism, favoring communitarianism and collectivism. To them, I would say that this is not necessarily a vision for how the world ought to be, but rather a clear-eyed confrontation with the world as it is; a sober cold, hard look at the plain facts through which one can understand the cooperative power dynamics at play around them, for better or for worse. The overriding principle is skeptical inquiry and scientific scrutiny; seeing the world for what it is so as to better understand our place in it. If we wish to maintain our right to make lifestyle choices as individuals, preserve our autonomy as individuals, and preserve any of our individual rights as they come under assault, we will need to collaborate to do so. This is no more contrary to the left hand path than is organizing a Church or Temple around the individualist philosophy to begin with.

There are caveats to the human capacity for cooperation. Humans are naturally tribal and, as according to Joshua Greene, neuroscientist, philosopher, and Professor of Psychology at Harvard University, “humans were designed for cooperation, but only with some people. Our moral brains evolved for cooperation within groups, and perhaps only in the context of personal relationships. Our moral brains did not evolve for cooperation between groups (at least not all groups).”[27] However, the human tendency to divide and categorize into “Us” and “Them” can not be seen as vindication of the idea that our “natural state” is one of conflict, nor does it nullify the reality that individually and collectively the GREATER GAINS TO WELL-BEING are achieved by way of cooperative strategies.

Altruism

Modern psychological research DOES NOT SUPPORT the idea that altruism is a defective and counterproductive cultural construct, as declared by LaVeyan philosophy. Rather, it appears that empathetic and sympathetic rapport are essential to the healthy, developed mind, without which an ability to make rational decisions is seriously compromised.[28] LaVey insisted that all acts of compassion were ultimately selfish, and altruistic acts are done for the purpose of making those who perform them feel good.

But if Social Darwinism does not accurately reflect evolutionary laws, and humans are neither naturally warring nor entirely cooperative, what of the burdensome “masses” whose ignorance of social ills cause them to contribute to the overall misery of the human condition? And what of our burgeoning population excess that demands, sooner or later, a need for a stratification upon which population reduction plans—perhaps by reproductive licensing—might be premised? What will “thin the herd”? The population continues to grow dramatically while violence and warfare continue to decline worldwide. Reduction in disease and advances in medical science mean that more people are living much longer lives. With finite resources, it seems apparent that Malthus’ predictions of overpopulation must eventually prove true.

Overrun by the Herd

Malthusian Theory has found itself a consideration in public policy debates of the past, and the results were regrettable. (---) In fact, Malthus was wrong

in his own time, and he is still wrong today. Population growth has not been a geometric increase. Advances in agriculture have increased food production to the point that famine is generally a matter of resources not reaching population, rather than a paucity of resources to share. Population growth trends show "the annual POPULATION GROWTH RATE actually peaked half a century ago at more than 2%, and has fallen by half since then, to 1.1% in 2017."[29] In many parts of the world, fertility rates have fallen below the replacement level, and—perhaps counter-intuitively—the better fed and economically sustainable nations show the greatest decline in birth-rate, perhaps as a byproduct of lower concern for infant mortality. The rational concern now is not for policies that seek to impose population reduction methods, but for encouraging a respect for natural resources and the environment. We're going to need to develop cooperative strategies to preserve both.

It appears that "the masses" are just something we will have to live with. But, again, who are "the masses"? Their existence is so intuitive that everybody seems to recognize who "they" are, while nobody recognizes themselves as among them. They are the ignorant and inept, the conformists who do as they are told and believe the flagrant lies that they have been spoon-fed. They are sheep. They exist on either side of the political divide. We loathe the masses for their compliance with fascist regimes, while autocrats justify despotism as necessary to control the masses. The masses can be persuaded that the world is flat, while flat-earthers believe they stand outside the masses and their received wisdom of a spherical Earth. In fact, the more persuaded by patently absurd and discredited arguments one is, the more convinced are they that the oppressive force of "masses" conceals and marginalizes the truth, and that they are amongst a rare and superior elite. So it is that those who get their "news" from debunked and intellectually embarrassing conspiracist sites, such as InfoWars, manage to believe that their acceptance of the ludicrous is, in fact, their distinction from the conformist sheep who dominate the human population. "The masses" are an artificial construct, invoked all too often in an attempt to elevate oneself, not by self-improvement, but by the diminishment of everybody else.

Science, Enlightenment and Early Modern Satanism

In his book Modern Satanism: Anatomy of a Radical Subculture, published

before the founding of The Satanic Temple, and documenting the rise and fall of LaVeyan Satanism, author Chris Mathews writes, “the Satanic eschewal of compassion, contempt of democratic conventions and scorn for egalitarian values is diametrically opposed to the most basic liberal principles.”[30] However, the roots of Modern Satanism, reaching back to Milton’s Paradise Lost, and elaborated by 19th century romantics, were decidedly egalitarian and the embodiment of liberal democratic ideals. Whereas LaVeyan Satanism can be viewed as a response to the post-Darwin culture wars, early modern Satanism was a construction of a new cultural mythological framework in response to the fall of Christendom, and the rise of Enlightenment Values. As I once elaborated in an interview:

Philosophically speaking, The Church of Satan is a fundamentalist LaVeyan organization, which makes a certain sense from a business perspective because they base their authenticity on the fact that they inherited Anton LaVey’s organization and claim his achievements as their own. They hold to a remarkably similar philosophy as you find espoused by radical Tea Party Christians on the theocratic Right: Ayn Rand-inspired Social Darwinist authoritarian-fetishizing libertarianism, but with a bit of occultic ritual magic thrown in. The Satanic Temple espouses a non-supernatural anti-authoritarian philosophy that views the metaphorical literary construct of Satan as a liberator from oppression of the mind and body. OUR CANON embodies the Romantic Satanism of Milton, Blake, Shelley, to, particularly, Anatole France, whose Revolt of the Angels is a primary text in TST. From its inception, modern Satanism, as it came to be defined in the Revolutionary era of Romantics, was very much a non-theistic movement aligned with Liberty, Equality and Rationalism. With that in mind, I think we’re rather closely aligned with early Modern Satanism, rather than some type of wildly aberrant, unique and unrecognizable contemporary off-shoot.

[. . .] Whether we interpret them literally or not, the mythological backdrop by which we each contextualize our existential grounding is profoundly important in our lives. I feel that theists are subjugated by their myths, while we are empowered by ours. The literary Satanists of the Revolutionary Era understood this, and their power to change the world by way of altering the cultural mythological structure was certainly not lost on them. One can read some artful exposition on this point in Shelley’s A DEFENSE OF POETRY.

Ruben van Luijk, a religion scholar and author of Children of Lucifer: The

Origins of Modern Religious Satanism, traces the rise of Modern Satanism from Milton through the Revolutionary era and beyond, noting of the French Revolution, “the Revolution came to signify a the advent of a new spirit in European man that affirmed his right to shape his own political, cultural, and religious destiny, if necessary in opposition against the ‘divinely ordained’ structures of tradition. Deeply internally divided as both camps might have been, the European intelligentsia would henceforth be split in ‘Left’ and ‘Right,’ into those in favor of radical or ‘progressive’ change and those opposed to it.

As a matter of fact, the terms ‘Left’ and ‘Right’ themselves originate with the French Revolution, when the more radical members of parliament had been seated to the left of the president.” [. . .] “[T]he French Revolution had proceeded to give ‘insurrection’ a wholly new, positive meaning for substantial parts of Europe’s intellectual elite. This re-valuation reflected on the myth of Satan as well. For radical sympathizers of the Revolution like Godwin and Shelley, Satan was no longer an evil insurgent against righteous and cosmic order, but the mirror image and mythological embodiment of the revolutionary standing up against arbitrary and despotic power. Thus it is not surprising that the Romantic poets who lauded Satan can invariably be located somewhere on the Leftists’ side of the political spectrum.”

Per Faxneld, Senior lecturer/associate professor at Södertörn University, Stockholm and author of Satanic Feminism, notes, “During the nineteenth century, socialists all over the Western world employed Satan as a symbol of the workers’ emancipation from capitalist tyranny and the toppling of the Christian Church, which they perceived as a protector of this oppressive system. Starting with the English Romantics at the end of the eighteenth century, European radicals developed a discourse of symbolic Satanism, which was put to use by major names in socialism like Godwin, Proudhon, and Bakunin.”

With this lineage in Satanic thought, the Church of Satan-authoritarian concept of Satanism demands more justification than the Humanistic-Satanic character of The Satanic Temple. Indeed, intuitions about the character of what Satanism is to those who identify as Satanists, as assumed by those who recognize the rebel angel archetype from Miltonic lore, seems more closely aligned to The Satanic Temple’s beliefs than the autocratic Tea Party Objectivism of the Church of Satan . . . so much so that many people are perplexed to learn of the Church of Satan’s fetishization of authoritarianism,

and one sees little to none of those philosophical positions so much as alluded to on the Church of Satan's Twitter account—their primary outlet for "activity"—where they generally post snarky memes and commentary upon any current pop cultural references to Satan.

The Satanic Temple does not subscribe to prescriptive definitions of what current political fads deem "Left" or "Right." We stand with Enlightenment principles which at times can be viewed as Liberal, as when we fight against the encroachments of so-called "conservative" theocrats, or can even be interpreted at times as conservative, as when we stand up for preservation of the American Constitutional principles that the theocrats seek to revise, subvert, and nullify. But while we do not seek to adjust our values to conform to the norms of a particular political affiliation, it is senseless to claim that our beliefs and our values have no political relevance, or insist that we must refrain from engagement in public affairs, even as our most basic values are clearly under legislative assault.

We certainly can not disregard LaVey when we consider Modern Satanism, but what is his legacy to be? I have met people who were friends with LaVey during his life, and some of them feel confident, despite the philosophical differences between us, that LaVey would appreciate what The Satanic Temple is doing today. How could this be? If we believe LaVey would have maintained a "faith" in Social Darwinism, the non-cooperative nature of humankind, and Malthusian Theory regardless of the scientific evidence that would come to light against them, then undoubtedly LaVey would have little tolerance for The Satanic Temple's Humanistic ideals. LaVey, of course, was a product of his time, and his perception of facts was colored by contemporary events. As I once previously explained:

In the case of LaVey, he actually was living in a time in which violence in the United States was trending upward and was a cause for alarm. During the 1960s, crime STEADILY AND DRAMATICALLY ROSE till about 1995 when it began to plummet, eventually, to where we happily are now. LaVey seems to have looked at what was unique in the culture around him at the time to determine what may have precipitated the rise in crime, and to determine what might need to change to make things better. He looked critically at the Rights Revolution and he despised the Hippy culture. He imagined a stratified and tribally divided, non-democratic world. He advocated police state politics.

Turns out, HE WAS WRONG.

Secular democratic states are less likely to ENGAGE IN WAR against each other and less likely to engage in terrorism or political violence than autocratic states. The rise in democratic states and the concurrent diminution in autocracies CORRELATES TO THE GLOBAL TREND in REDUCED VIOLENCE. Intermingling cultures—free to "appropriate" from each other—fare better than insular ethnic/religious/nationalist cults. And crime has, as stated, DRASTICALLY PLUMMETED in the United States without any massive reductions in Civil Liberties. In fact, the Rights Revolution has continued to move forward, slowly—but with great resistance, particularly from the Christian Right—and inexorably. I highly recommend a book by Steven Pinker, The Better Angels of Our Nature, which explores this topic in great detail.

If LaVey truly sought to advocate for a philosophical system based on the best available scientific evidence, then The Satanic Temple can be viewed as an evolution in the non-theistic Satanism he endorsed. If one believes that in order to stay true to LaVeyan Satanism one must embrace the pseudosciences LaVey endorsed in his lifetime, then The Satanic Temple is a clean break from the LaVeyan. To us it matters little which interpretation gains dominance.

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[17] Hedenborg White and Gregorius, "The Satanic Temple," p. 98.

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